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THE

INJURIOUS EFFECTS

OF

STIMULANTS.

The present system of living—partaking of too rich foods, as pastry, saccharine, and fatty substances, alcoholic drinks, and an insufficient amount of exercise—frequently deranges the liver. I would advise all bilious people, unless they are careful to keep the liver acting freely, to exercise great care in the use of alcoholic drinks, avoid sugar, and always dilute largely with water. Experience shows that sugar, pink or chemically coloured sherbet, mild ales, port wine, dark sherries, sweet champagne, liqueurs, and brandies are all very apt to disagree; while light white wines, and gin or whisky largely diluted with soda-water, will be found the least objectionable. ENO'S "FRUIT SALT" is peculiarly adapted for any constitutional weakness of the liver; it possesses the power of reparation when digestion has been disturbed or lost, and places the invalid on the right track to health. A world of woes is avoided by those who keep and use ENO'S "FRUIT SALT"; therefore no family should ever be without it.

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PERSONAL POLITICS

The Political Situation

is about the most intricate, the most uncertain, the most tricky which I have ever known in the course of my connection with politics. No one knows what is going to turn up, neither Tories, nor Liberals, nor Unionists, nor Irishmen. A leading statesman on the front Opposition bench said to me the other day, "Really, our opponents have been behaving very well about this business. Neither Tories nor Unionists in the House are attacking

SEE "FACTS AND FACES."

or jeering at us, or doing anything to make our position more uncomfortable than it is." That is quite true, but the reason is obvious. They are all sitting quiet because they have not the least notion of the way in which the cat is going to jump. Parnell may win, or be beaten. Irishmen may settle down, or be turned into a vast Donnybrook Fair. The Liberal Party may shake together, or be dissolved into its elements. Lord Salisbury may be, and I think is, bound for another long spell of power; or the Liberal and Unionist split may be healed, and he may be confronted with a hostile majority. All these things are possible moves in the game. One player has already made up his mind as to the part he intends to take.

Mr. Chamberlain

wants to come back, and is doing his level best to get there. He has been employing one or two weak-kneed Home Rulers in the House to back his claims, and he has also been carrying on a good deal of lobbying of a similar character. At present I do not find that he has obtained many converts, but he certainly has a few who think that the time is opportune for a reunion of the two sections, and who consider that Mr. Chamberlain would be useful if such a combination could be formed. But I fancy it will turn out in the end that Mr. Chamberlain's tone and aims will be found incompatible with Liberal Union. Mr. Chamberlain has in no way the idea of coming back as a prodigal. Quite the contrary. He thinks that a serious wrong has been done him, and that the least the Liberal Party can do to repair it is to make him Mr. Gladstone's first lieutenant. He thinks, indeed, that the time has come when the Liberal leader might fairly retire and give place to younger men. He is, however, afraid that the influence of Mr. Labouchere and others will be too strong, and his latest speech at Birmingham shows that he has a little bit gone back to his earlier plans and hopes. For my part, though, as I said, all things are possible in this strongest of situations, I disbelieve in the Chamberlain reunion scheme.

Mr. Gladstone

continues to bear up cheerfully under the great disappointment which has befallen him. Only one sorrowful expression has escaped his lips. "I have been rolling up this stone up the hill for five years," he said, "and now it has rolled down again; and I am eighty-one." Beyond this, the old man is patiently waiting the development of things in Ireland. He has the curious habit of throwing off all his troubles at a moment's notice, and as he is interested in so many things—in theology, the drama, society, travels, and literature—he is able to divide his mind into a set of compartments, so that one never interferes with the other. This is a very great gift, but I never knew any public man possess it in a more remarkable way than Mr. Gladstone. The result is that public affairs never trouble him long. Moreover, if it should happen that he must decide to return to private life, he will do so with the greatest joy and eagerness. He continues in public life because he thinks it his duty to remain there, but his heart is with his books and with his family, and I do not believe that he would quit public life with one single pang of regret.

The Struggle in Ireland.

As for the way the fight in Ireland will go, I must again hold my hand. Parnell is losing desperately in character and credit. He has thrown off all his old reserve and dignity, and has come perilously near what I must call blackguardism. He has, moreover, Dublin with him. I am told that it would be utterly impossible for the anti-Parnellites to hold a meeting there. In other parts of the country they are more confident. A Nationalist Member writes to me to say that his party has all the respectability and solid force of country with it, and that Mr. Parnell has only the Fenians and the corner boys. One of the reasons of this is quite other than what the public mind imagines. Parnell's great strength arises from the fact that the publicans are with him almost to a man, and are using all their influence in his favour. This is partly due to the fact that Mr. John O'Connor, who has sided strongly with his old leader, is a representative of the publican constituents in Parliament, and the great opponent of all Sunday Closing Bills and other temperance measures. No one who has not been to Ireland can imagine the terrible and baleful influence of the liquor interest. Nearly everybody can sell liquor in Ireland, and in some streets nearly every other house is a drinking-shop. Grocers, too, sell stout and spirits, and life, in more than one Irish town that I could name, is one long revel. Mr. Parnell, it is believed, has also money at his back. He has a large fund—I am told about £22,000—in the Bank of England, and Mr. Harrington has also control of considerable funds. All this is very bad news for Ireland. For, whatever one may think of Home Rule, Parnell is no more to be trusted with the supreme power in that unhappy country than a madman. If he wins, it is all over.

The Prospects of Home Rule.

Anyhow, I suspect that Home Rule in England has received a blow from which it is not likely to recover for many a day to come. What is producing the bad effect is the Kilkenny cat business. I have already met half a dozen people who were ready to vote for Home Rule, and who did not greatly concern themselves over Mr. Parnell's misdemeanours, but who now say that they cannot vote the power of self-government to people who would abuse it in order to fly at each other's throats. "Local government they may have," said one of these gentlemen, "but no Home Rule for me." This is a feeling that one has got to acknowledge is certainly growing. To friends of Ireland it is a very sorrowful business, whichever way you look at it. But there it is, and it is just as well to look facts straight in the face. A good many Liberals, indeed, go even further, and say that the best thing the Liberal Party can do is to throw over Home Rule and to go in for a good social programme. These are the sort of things that are flying about in the air. In what direction they will at length solidify I cannot, as I said before, well determine.

The Marks Libel Case.

The Marks case, with its very remarkable ending—no pun is intended—will, I should say, end in Mr. Marks's retirement or banishment from public life. He has practically been condemned by a jury of his countrymen as an unscrupulous adventurer, and they have also apparently come to the conclusion that the charges against his private character are true. If he chooses he can accept this mandate, and retire a rich man. I am told that at this moment he is worth £200,000. He has a very fine collection of pictures, and he is a large landowner. But he is not the kind of man to retire. One of the cleverest journalists I ever knew, he is very much more than a journalist. The *Financial News* is a wonderful property, and has a tremendous influence. But I suspect that if he does not retire from the County Council that body will request his retirement. He is not popular there, and this year he was not elected on any single committee. It is a pity that so extraordinarily clever and brilliant a man should have mixed himself up in the matters which have brought about his downfall.

A French View of the Parnell Crisis.

M. Nacquet is now in England, and he has been expressing his opinion with great freedom on the Parnell business. He cannot understand why the English people banish politicians from public life because of offences such as Mr. Parnell has committed. "But we too," said M. Nacquet naïvely, "have our prejudices. With us a politician who is challenged to fight a duel and declines to go out with his man would have to seek retirement as surely as Mr. Parnell with you." That lets an interesting bit of light on to the difference between French and English conceptions of public morality.

THE SCENE-SHIFTER.

Princess Christian has sent a message to the authorities of the Church Army Social Scheme, in which she expresses "a very great interest in the work," and hopes later on to be able to contribute towards it.

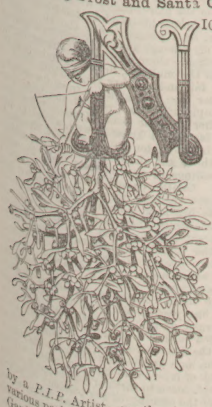
Prevention of Adulteration.—Several gentlemen interested in the more efficient prevention of adulteration recently visited the manufactory of Messrs. John Frederick and the Co. (Limited), spice merchants, to inspect the process of making spice ingenious "castor pepperette," in which the firm supplies only the finest pepper of guaranteed purity, and completely protected from subsequent adulteration. The patent "pepperette" is a castor, slightly, portable, and effectual, which, by means of an ingeniously contrived valve, keeps the pepper or spice hermetically sealed in the lower portion, and releases, on pressure of a spring at the bottom of the castor, sufficient quantity for use, which passes through the apertures in the top in the usual manner.

CADBURY'S COCOA.—"A Food alike suitable for building up the growing body, and for repairing the waste which is incidental to all the processes of life."—*Health.*—[ADVT.]

LIVER COMPLAINTS.—Dr. King's Pandelion and Quinine Liver Pills, without Mercury, remove Liver Complaints, Biliousness, Headache, Indigestion, Constipation.—[ADVT.]

FACTS AND FACES.

King Frost and Santa Claus.



NICE weather for the young and healthy and well-to-do has it been in the country and in the pleasant parts of London, where King Frost covered the ornamental waters with ice, and the heavy snowfall made West-End houses and trees look delightfully picturesque. Skating has been freely indulged in—as shown by a *P.I.P.* Artist—on the frozen rinks of the various parks. The Long Water in Kensington Gardens has been in high favour, as may be imagined from a glance at the front Illustration. "Cold without" December has also boasted many a "warm within" scene that should go far to redeem town from being stigmatised as "Darkest London" entirely. Mr. Henry Labouchere, M.P., for instance, has once again resolved himself into that seasonable visitor, Santa Claus, and has warmed the hearts of many with the annual

"Truth" Toy Exhibition,

which transformed the Grosvenor Gallery into a splendid Lowther Arcade for a few days preparatory to the grand distribution of dolls and Tom Smith's crackers and a host of playthings, some 20,000 in all. When it is said that all these were tastefully arranged in the Grosvenor Gallery by Mr. and Mrs. Horace Voules, some idea may be formed of the hard work entailed upon these willing workers and their volunteer assistants. It was a sight to cheer the spirits of anyone—this gallery full of home-made toys and dolls dressed by ladies full of sympathy with the forlorn little ones who will spend Christmas in the wards of the London hospitals and workhouses. Long after Christmas has passed—as I recently had an opportunity of witnessing, in St. Bartholomew's Hospital, one of the neediest institutions of the kind—do these *Truth* toys amuse the poor children. They are things of joy and beauty to the wee sufferers all the year round—loving links which bind rich and poor together—eloquent proofs that the big heart of London is, after all, full of genuine charity.

The Poor of St. Clement Danes,

the parish in which the *P.I.P.* is published, at this most inclement season of the year, let the snow be never so thick, find a veritable Hospice de St. Bernard in the Clare Market Soup Kitchen, the cheery and benevolent monks whereof are delineated in a *P.I.P.* Artist's sketch of this invaluable little institution. I have much pleasure in recommending the St. Clement Danes Laundry and Soup Kitchen, situated in Sheffield-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, to the notice of those good souls who kindly make it a rule to create an appetite for their own Christmas dinners by contributing something substantial to the meals of the waifs and strays whose lives are harder than ever when winter deprives them of the odds and ends of work they depend upon. I could take you to one particular bit of Clare Market, which is as miserable as anything General Booth has written of in "Darkest England"—a cluster of wretched shanties indescribably woebegone. Mention of General Booth's name reminds one that it will be a thousand pities if the tide of charity which I am glad to know is flowing into his coffers should stem the flow of contributions to those local agencies which have done so much to ameliorate the sad condition of the very poor. The St. Clement Danes Soup Kitchen, which gives a large basin of nutritious soup and a filling piece of bread to everyone producing a penny ticket, is greatly in need of funds. Having inspected both the Soup Kitchen and the admirable laundry, I can confidently say that this serviceable hospice, which is kept afloat wholly by voluntary subscriptions, deserves all the cash that can be sent to its genial treasurer, Mr. Herbert H. Twining, 215, Strand (to whom I shall be pleased to hand a sovereign from a friend of mine). Mr. Twining has associated with him in this good work an indefatigable hon. treasurer in Mr. Charles J. Livett, a blithe spirit who carries Christmas with him throughout the twelvemouth, and does his utmost cheerily to comfort those around him.

"Beauty and the Beast"

will, I believe, transcend all that Mr. Augustus Harris has yet done in the way of pantomime at Drury-Lane. The grand procession of Coins is bound to be the talk of "All London"; Lady Dunlo will likewise be on every lip; and the jocosities and drolleries of Harry Nicholls and Herbert Campbell are bound to yield a store of amusement. "Hush, the Bogie Man!" will not improbably be applied to Mr. M'Dougall.

Metzler's Music.

A roll of music calculated to make your ears tingle with anticipatory pleasure comes from the famous house of Metzler and Co., 42, Great Marlborough-street, W. What a deal this estimable firm must do to promote harmony in British households so lucky as to possess one or two musicians in the family! Particularly apropos to the welcome Yuletide and singing season is the issue by Metzler of a number of cheap part-songs, like Herrick's "To Blossoms," Shakspere's "Under the Greenwood Tree" and "Winter," Burns's "Oh! my love is like the red, red rose," &c., composed by F. Osmond Carr; likewise Dr. J. F. Bridge's "Bold Turpin" Romance and Tennyson's "Goose," set as humorous part-songs; also Rimbault's edition of Henry Purcell's "Dido and Æneas" cantata. Musical students will find "Robner's Complete Harmony" of signal service. For vocalists Alfred Cellier has composed some charming songs in Tennyson's rippling "Brook" and "Throstle," and the Poet Laureate's "Miller's Daughter" and "Cradle Song." The young, who like to trip it featly as they go, on the light fantastic toe, will revel in Bucalossi's "Douglas Gordon" waltz and Stocks Hammond's "Brother Jonathan" polka; and "Metzler's Red Library" of vocal and instrumental music should be in great vogue. As for "Metzler's Christmas Album," with its hollyberry red cover, that speaks for itself, as it offers for one shilling three songs by Sir Arthur Sullivan, Alfred Cellier, and H. Walker, and a variety of spirited pieces of dance music, including A. Gwyllym Crowe's delightful vocal waltz, "Home"; P. Bucalossi's and May Ostlere's "Con Amore" waltzes; Vaughan Williams's "Hammer and Tongs" polka, and Charles Godfrey's lively "Queen of the Isles Quadrilles."

"Much Ado about Nothing."

Few musical amateurs remember that the famous French composer Berlioz wrote a clever opera on the subject of this charming comedy. The scenes closely followed the incidents in which Beatrice and Benedick appear. We are so slow in adopting any new works, or that of Berlioz might be performed, as it was a few day's ago with success in Germany.

Politeness and Frost.

The ladies of Marienberg, in East Prussia, have displayed great consideration for the sterner sex since the winter has set in. They have advertised in the newspapers that they will not, during the continuance of severe weather, expect the gentlemen to take off their hats, but, in order that the courtesies of life may not be neglected, the gentlemen are expected to make a military salute, which they promise will be duly acknowledged. Could not the humanity of the ladies of Marienberg be imitated in London?

"No Presents."

In a recent wedding at Washington, the bride and bridegroom announced to their friends that they would accept "no presents." It would not be amiss if the custom died out, for it has become quite a tax upon the friends of many a newly married couple. Whole pages sometimes, and columns frequently, are devoted to descriptions of the costly presents made at such ceremonies, and the worst of it is that many of those on which a great deal of money has been expended are perfectly useless to those who receive them. A young friend of ours received on his marriage the gift of a silver inkstand. This would have been pleasant enough but that three others chose the same kind of gift. Our friend has thought of Attenborough, but his pretty wife says it is unlucky to sell presents of the kind. Certainly a better method is required of paying compliments on such occasions than the useless presents so often made. One rich gentleman we know sent a cheque as his gift; but in one case he was met with the rather ungracious response that the young people "were not in a destitute condition." The practice is unquestionably open to reform.

Hargan.

There will be a pretty general sympathy with the Home Secretary's decision in what is called the Kingsland murder case. For shooting two ruffians who were attacking him, Hargan was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude—a sentence which staggered the very jury that found him guilty of manslaughter. An agitation was set afloat, in which, curiously enough, the *Saturday Review*, of all papers, took part. Hargan had carried a revolver as part of his outfit as an emigrant, and I cordially indorse the suggestion of a contemporary that, at the end of his year's sentence, he should be liberally helped to resume his broken career.

Canon Molesworth.

I regret very much to see the announcement of the death of Canon Molesworth, in his seventy-fourth year. He wrote many books, a "History of the Church of England" included; but he has been best known outside his Rochdale Vicarage by his "History of England from 1830 to 1870." Great claims cannot be made for that work on the score of its political philosophy or its literary style. To the venerable Canon all modern history was summed up in the great Reform Bill and the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and his style weighed heavily on the mind of those who had the advantage of comparing it with Mr. Justin McCarthy's sketch of the same epoch. Nevertheless, Canon Molesworth's "History" is a more valuable book than Mr. McCarthy's "Our Own Times"—more crowded with facts of importance to the student of politics. Canon Molesworth, like most Rochdale men, took the keenest interest in the co-operative movement. He was also a vegetarian, although his robust frame gave little encouragement to the meat-eater to scoff. His loss will be keenly felt by all to whom he was known.

My Annual Card:—

A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
A HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO YOU ALL!

THE PROMPTER.

TESTED.

"Mr. Balfour," said the Queen, "have you investigated this potato famine in Ireland?"

"Yes, your Majesty. I went to Dublin for that purpose. The reports are totally without foundation. I had two helps to potatoes at every meal."

TOBACCONISTS COMMENCING.—ILLD. GUIDE (229 pages, 2d.), "How to Commence."—Tobacconists' Outfitting Co., 186, Euston-road, London.—HY. MYERS. Estab. 1866.—[ADVT.]

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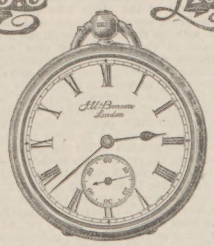

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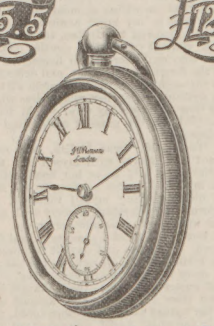

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BENSON'S CLOCKS.—Applications for Agencies invited.

Mr. T. D. Sullivan, M.P., has sailed from New York for England, on board the White Star steamer Britannic. He was accompanied to the steamer by Messrs. Dillon and O'Connor, who wished him *bon voyage*.

The Authorities of St. Paul's Cathedral received a communication conveying a special request from the Queen that the late Sir Edgar Boehm might be buried in the cathedral. The desire was, of course, immediately acceded to. The funeral took place last Saturday. A grave was chosen next to that of Sir Edwin Landseer. The Queen sent a wreath.

For the purpose of perpetuating the fame of Captain John Smith, founder of Virginia, U.S., a citizen of St. Sepulchre's City, whose remains are interred in the parish church, the Vestry intend to erect a memorial near the spot where it is believed he was buried. At a recent meeting, Mr Churchwarden Herbert stated that many Americans visit the church every year.

The Wonderful Adventures of Phra the Phœnician.

RETOLD BY EDWIN LESTER ARNOLD.

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CHAPTER XI.

NOW, when that fair young English girl, at her father's voice, turned to acknowledge my presence—thinking it was some other new knight of the many who came there every hour, she lifted her eyes to mine—and then, all on a sudden, without rhyme or reason, she started back and blanched whiter than her own wimple, and then flushed again, equally unaccountably, and fell a-trembling and staring at me in a wondrous fashion. She came a step forward, as though she would greet some long-looked-for friend, and then withdrew—and half held out her hand, and took it back, the while the colour came and went upon her cheeks in quick flushes, and, stirred by some strange emotion, her bosom rose and fell under the golden cestus and the lawn with the stress of her feelings. The sudden storm, however invoked, shook that sweet fabric most mightily. There, in that very minute it seemed,—there, in that merry, careless place in sight of me, but a gaudy gallant a little more thoughtful-looking, perhaps, than those she often saw, yet, all the same, naught but a stranger gallant, unknown and nameless to her—moved by some affinity within us, just as the alchemist's magic touch converts between two breaths one elixir in his crucibles to another, so, before my eyes, I saw in that fair girl's pallid face love flush through her veins and light her heart and eyes with a responding blush.

And I—I the unhappy, I the sorrow bestower, as I saw her first, what of all things in this wide world should I think of—what should leap up in my mind as I perked my gilded scabbard and bowed low to the polished oaken floor in my glittering Plantagenet finery—what vision should come to me in that latter-day hall, among those mandolin-fingering courtiers, before that costly raimented maiden, the fair heiress of a thousand years of care and gentle living, that girl leaning frightened and shy upon the arm of her strong father like a soft white mist-cloud in the shadow of a mountain—what thought, what idea, but a swift revision of Blodwen, my wild, ruddy, untutored British wife!

All those gaudy butterflies of the new day, that stately home and that fair flower herself, shrank into nothing; and as the white lightning leaps through the dull void of midnight, and shows for one dazzling second some long-remembered country, ashine in every leaf and detail, to the startled pilgrim, and then is gone with all the ghostly mirage of its passage, so in that surprising moment, so full of import, Blodwen rose to my mind against all reason and likelihood—Blodwen the Briton, the ruddy-haired—Blodwen radiant with her gentle motherhood—Blodwen who could scream so fiercely to her clansmen in the forefront of conflict, and drive her bloody chariot through the red mud of battle with wounded foemen writhing under her remorseless wheels more blithely than a latter-day maid would trip through the spangled meadow grass of springtime—Blodwen rose before me!

Oh! 'twas wild, 'twas foolish, past explaining, nonsense; and, angry with myself and that white maid who stood and hung her head before me, I stroked my hand across my face to rid me of the fancy, and, gathering myself together, made my bow, murmuring something fiercely civil, and turned my back upon her to seek another group.

Yes; but if you think I conquered that fancy, you are wrong. For days and days it haunted me, even though I laughed it to scorn, and, what made the matter more difficult, more perplexing, was that I had not guessed in error—the unhappy Isobel had loved me from first sight, and, against every precedent her nature would have warranted, grew daily deeper in the toils. And I, who never yet had turned from the eyes of suppliant maid, watched her colour shift and fly as I came or went, and strode gloomy, unmindful through all her pretty artifices of maiden tenderness, burning the meanwhile with love for her disdainful sister. It was a strange medley, and in one phase or another pursued me all the time I was n that noble keep. When I was not wooing I was being wooed. Alas! and all the coldness I got from that black-browed lady with the goddess carriage and the faultless skin I passed on to the poor enamoured girl who dogged my idle footsteps for a word.

Thus, on one day we had a tournament. All round the great castle, under the oaks, were pitched the tents of the troopers, while the pennons and bannerets of knights and barons, as we saw them from the turret top, shone in the sunlight like a field of flowers. The soldier-yeomen had their sports and contests on the greensward, and we went down to watch them. Thor! but I never saw such bronzed and stalwart fellows, or witnessed anything like the truth and straightness of those stinging flights of shafts the archers sent against their butts! Then the next day, following the sports of the common people, in the tilt-yard inside the barbican, we held a tourney, a mock battle and a breaking of spears, a very gorgeous show indeed, and near as exciting as an honest mêlée itself.

So tuneful in my ears proved the shivering of lances and the clatter of swords on the steel panoply of the knights, that, though at first I held aloof, stern and gloomy with my futile passion, yet presently I itched to take a spear, and, since those sparkling riders liked the fun so much, to let them try whether my right hand had lost the cunning it learnt before their fathers were conceived. And as I thought so, standing among the chief ones in that brilliant tourney ring, up came the white rose and tempted me to break a lance, and sighed so softly and brushed against me with her scented draperies, and tried with feeble self-command to meet my eyes and could not, and was so obviously wishful that I should ride a course or two, and so prettily in love, that I was near relenting of my coldness.

I did unbend so much as to consent to mount. A page fetched my armour and my mighty black charger draped in crimson-blazoned velvet and ribboned from head to tail, and then I went to the rear of the lists and put on the steel.

"Thanks, good squire!" I said to the youth who thrust my pointed toes into the stirrups when I was on my horse. "Now give me up my gauntlets and post me in my principles."

"Fie, Sir, not to know," quoth he, "the worship of weapons and the honour of fair ladies!"

"Thanks. That is not difficult to remember; and as to my practice?"

"Ah! there you confuse him," put in a jester standing by. "No good knight likes to be bound too closely as to that."

As I rode round the lists, a white hand from under the sisters' dais—to whom belonging I well could guess—threw me a flower, the which fell under my sleek charger's hoofs and was stamped into the trodden mould. And then the trumpet sounded. "Avant!" called the glittering marshal—and we met in mid career.

Seven strong knights did I jerk from their high-peaked saddles that morning, and won a lady's golden head-ring, and rode round about the circus with it on my lance-point. When I came under where Isobel sat, I saw her fair cheeks redder than my ribbons with maiden expectation; but, as I passed without a sign, they grew whiter than her lawn. And then I reined up and deposited that circlet at the footstool of her sister. The proud, cold maid accepted the homage as was her duty, but scarcely deigned to lower her eyes to the level of my helmet-plumes while her father put it on her forehead.

A merry time we had in that courtly place waiting for the signal to start; and much did I learn and note—soon the favourite gallant in that goodly company, the acknowledged strongest spearman in the lists, the best teller of strange stories by an evening fire! But never an inch of way could I make with the impenetrable girl on whom my wayward heart was set, while the other—the younger—made her sweet self the pointing stock of high and low, she was so blindly, so obviously in love.

One day it came to a climax. We met by chance in a glade of black shadows among the cedar branches, I and that damsel in white, and, finding I would not woo her, she set to work and wooed me—so sweet, so strong, so passionate, that to this day I cannot think how I withstood it. Yes, and that fair, slim maid, renowned through all the district for her gentle reticence, when I would not answer love with love, and glance for glance, fired up with white-hot passion, threw hesitance to the wind, and besought and knelt to me, and asked no more than to be my slave, so sweet, so reckless in her passion, that it was not the high-born English lady who knelt there, but rather it seemed to me my dear, fiery, untutored British Princess! Fool I was not to see it then, witless after so much not to guess the tameless spirit the intruder soul that poor girl at my feet held unwitting in her bosom!

She came to me, as I have said, all in a gust of feeling unlike herself, and, when I would not say that which she longed to hear, she wrung her hands, and then down she came upon her knees and clipped me round my jewelled belt and confessed her love for me in such a headlong rush of tearful eloquence I durst not write it.

"Lady," I said, lifting the supple girl to her feet, "I grieve, but it is useless. Forget! forgive! I cannot answer as you would."

"Ah, but," she answered, rushing again to the onset, sighing as now the hot, strange love that burnt within her and now her sweet native spirit strove for mastery—("surely, I think, I am possessed), I will not take 'No' for an answer. I am consumed (oh! fie to say it) for thee. I am not first in thy dear affection—why, then, I will be second. Not second! then I will be the hundredth from thy heart! My light, my life and fate, I cannot live without thee. Oh! as you were born by your mother's consummated love, as thou hast ever felt compunction for a white-cheeked maid, have pity on me! I tell thee I will follow thee to the ends of the earth (Lord! how my tongue runs on!) For one moiety of that affection perhaps a happier woman has I will serve you through life. Thou hast no wife, 'tis said, to hinder; thou art a soldier, and a score of them, ere I was touched with this strange infection, have sued hopeless for but a chance of that which is proffered thee so freely. Truth! they have told me I was fair, and tall, with a complexion that ridiculed the water-lilies on the moat, and hair, one said, was like ripe corn with a harvest sun upon it (it makes me blush"—I heard her whisper to herself—"to apprise myself like this), and yet you stand averse and sullen, with eyes turned from me, and deaf ears! Am I a sight so dreadful to you?"

"Maid!" I cried, shutting out her suppliant beauty from my heart—overfull, as I thought it, of that other one, her sister—"no man could look upon you and not be moved. The wayward Immortals have given you more sweetness than near any other woman I ever saw—'a sight so dreadful to me'—why, you are fairer than an early morning in May when the new sun gets up over the wet-flowered hawthorns! And for this very reason, for pity on us both, stand up, and dry your tears! Believe me, dear maid, where I go you cannot come. You tread the rough soldier's path! Why, those pretty velvet buskins would wear out i' the first march. And turn those dainty hands to the rough craft of war, to scouring harness and grooming chargers—oh! that were miserable indeed; those cherry lips are worse suited than you know for the chance fare of camp and watchfire, and these round arms would soon find a sword was heavier than a bodkin—there, again forget, forgive—and, perhaps, when I come back"——

But why should I further follow that sad love-scene under the broad-spreading cedars? Let it be sufficient for you that I soothed her as well as might be, and stanched her tears, and modified my coldness, taking her pretty hands and whispering to as dainty and greedy an ear as ever was opened to hear, perhaps, a little more of lover friendliness than I truly meant, and so we parted.

She besought and knelt to me, and asked no more than to be my slave.

Now see the shield turned. That very afternoon did the other sister unbend a point with cruel suavity, and set me joyous by promising to meet me at nightfall, whereat, as you will readily understand, every other event of the day faded into nothingness. At the appointed hour, just as the white mist floated in thin fine wisps from the shadowed moat on the eastward of the castle wall, and the red setting sun was throwing the strong black shadows of cedar branches upon the copper-gleaming windows and walls of the side that faced him, I rose, and, making some jesting excuse, slipped away from my noisy comrades in the hall into the shadows of the corridors. Yes! and, though you may smile, he who thought this Phœnician had plumbed the well of mortal love to the very death, had learnt all there was to learn, and left nothing that could stir him so much as a heart-beat in this fair field of adventure, was now tripping through the ruddy and black dusk, anxious and alert, his pulses beating a quicker measure than his feet, the native boldness of his nature all overlaid with new-born diffidence, fingering his silken points as he went, and conning pretty speeches, now hoping in his lover hesitance the tryst would not be kept, and then anon spurning himself for being so laggard and faint-hearted, and thus progressing in moods and minds as many as the gentle shadows checkering his path from many an oriel window and many a fluted casement, he came at length within sight of the deep-set window looking down over the pale-shining water and the heavy woods beyond, where his own love-tale was to be told.

And there, as I plucked back the last tapestry that barred my passage and stood still for a moment on the threshold—there before me, sitting on the tressels under the mullions, in the twilight, was the figure of my fair and haughty English girl.

She had her face turned away from the evening glow, her ample white cap, peaked and laced with gold on either crescent point, further threw into shadow the features I knew so well, while the fine shapely hands lay hidden in the folds of the ample dress which shone and glimmered in the dusk against the oak panellings of that ancient lobby in misty uncertainty. Gentle dame! My heart bounded with expectant triumph to see how pensive and downcast was her look, how still she sat, and how, methought, the white linen and the golden ceinture above her heart rose and fell even in that silent place with the tumult of maidenly passion within. My heart opened to her, I say, as though I were an enamoured shepherd about to pour a brand-new virgin love into the frightened ears of some timid country maid, and within my veins, as the heavy arras fell from my hands behind me, there surged up the molten stream of Eastern love! I waited neither to see nor hear else, but strode swiftly over the floor and cast myself down there at her feet upon one knee—gods! how it makes me smart to think of it!—I who had never bent a knee before in supplication to earth or heaven, and poured out before her the offering of my passion. Hot and swiftly I wooed her, saying I scarce know what, loosening my heart before that silent shrine, laying bare the keen strong throb of life and yearning that pulsed within me, persuading, entreating, cajoling, until both breath and fancy failed. And never under all that stream of love had the damsel given one sign, one single indication of existence.

Then on I went again, deeming the maid held herself not yet wooed enough, disporting myself before her, and pleading the simplicity of my love, saying how that, if it brought no great riches with it, yet was it the treasure of a truthful heart. Did she sigh to widen her father's broad lands? I swore by Osiris I would do it for her love better than any petty lordling could. Did she desire to shine, honoured above all women, where spears were broken or feasts were spread? Think of yon littered lists, I cried, and told her there was not a champion in all the world I feared—none who should not come humbled to her footstool; while, as for honour and recognition—Jove! I would pluck them from the King himself, even as I had plucked them from his betters. Yet never a sign that fair girl gave.

Full of wonder and surprise, I waited for a moment for some sign or show, if not of answering fire, at least of reason; and then, as I checked in full course my passionate pleadings, that wretched thing before me burst, not into the tears I expected of maidenly capitulation, nor into the proud anger of offended virgins, but into a silly, plebeian simper, which began in ludicrous smothered merriment under the folds of the lawn she held across her face, and ended, amid what appeared contending feelings, in a rustic outburst of sobs and exclamations.

I was on my feet in an instant, all my wild love-making dammed back upon my heart by suspicion and surprise, and as I frowned fiercely at that dim-seen form under the distorting shadow of the windows, it rose—to nothing like Alianora's height—and stepped out where the evening light better illumined us. And there that poor traitress tore off in anger and remorse the lace and linen of a well-born English maiden, and stood revealed before me the humblest, the meanest-seeming, and the most despised kitchen wench of any that served in that baronial hall!

You will guess what my feelings were as this indignity I had been put to rushed upon me, how in my wounded pride I crossed my arms savagely upon my breast, and turned away from that poor, simpering, rustic fool, and clenched my teeth, and swore fierce oaths against that cruel girl who, in her pride and insolence, had played me this sorry trick. Wild and bitter were the gusts of passion that swept through my heart, and all the more unruly since it was by and for a woman I had fallen, and there was none for me to take vengeance on.

In a few minutes I turned to the wretched tool of a vixen mistress. "Hast any explanation of this?" I sternly asked, pointing to the disordered finery that lay glimmering upon the floor.

The unhappy kitchenmaid nodded behind her tears and the thick red hands wherewith she was streaking two wet, round cheeks with alternate hues of grief and dinginess, and put a hand into her bosom and handed me a folded missive. I tore it open and read, in prettily scrawled old Norman French, that cruel message:—

This is to tell that nameless knight who has nothing to distinguish him but presumption, that although the daughter of an English peer must ever treat his suit with the contempt it deserves, yet will she go so far as to select him from among her father's vassals one to whom she thinks he might very fitly unburden his soul of its load of "love and fealty."

Such was the missive, one surely penned by as ungentle a hand as ever ministered to a woman's heart. I tore it into a hundred fragments, and then grimly pointed my traducer to the narrow wicket in the remote wall leading down by a hundred stony stairs to the scullion places whence she had come. She turned and went a little way towards it, then came sobbing back, and burst out into grief anew, and "Alas! alas! Sir," she cried, "this is the very worst task that ever I was put to! Shame upon Lady Alianora, and double shame upon me for doing her behests! I am sorry, Sir! indeed I am! Until you began that wonderful tale I thought 'twas but a merry game; but, oh, Sir! to see you there upon your knee, to see your eyes burning in the dark with true love for my false mistress—why, Sir, it would have drawn tears from the hardest stone in the mill down yonder. And ever as your talk went on just now, I kept saying to myself, Sure! but it must be a big heart which works a tongue like that; and when you had done, Sir, ah! before you were halfway through, though I could not stop you, yet I loathed my errand. I am sorry, Sir, indeed I am! I cannot go until I be forgiven!"

"There, there, silly girl," I said, my wrath quenched by her red eyes and humble amendment, "you are fully absolved."

She kissed my hands and dried her eyes, and swept together, with woman swiftness, the tattered things in which she had masqueraded, and then, as she was about to leave, I called her back.

Home Cure for Deafness.—A book describing Dr. Nicholson's System of Curing Deafness and Noises in the Head, by which a self-cure is effected at home. The Rev. D. H. W. Harlock, of The Parsonage, Milton-under-Wychwood, writes: "Try the system by all means; it is first rate, and has been of the utmost service to me." Post free, 3d. Gibb and Co., Publishers, 20, Rathbone-place, London, W.—[Advt.]

"Stay one moment, damsel! How much had you for thus betraying me?"

"Two zequins, Sir," she answered with simplicity.

"Why, then, here's three others to say naught about this evening's doings in the servants' hall. You understand? There, go! and no more tears or thanks," and, as the curtain fell upon her, I could not help muttering to myself, "What! two zequins to undo you, Phra, and three to mend it? Why, Phœnician, thou hast not been so cheap for thirteen hundred years!"

CHAPTER XII.

Grim and angry, all that night I chewed the bitter end of my rejection, and before the new day was an hour old determined life was no longer worth the living in that place. I determined to leave those walls at once, to leave all my songs unsung, my trysts unkept, to leave all my jolly comrades, the tilt-yards and banquets. But I could not do this so secret as I would. The very paying off of my score down in the buttery, the dismissing of my attendants, each with largess, the seriousness I could not but give to my morning salutation of some of those I should never see again, betrayed me. And thus a whisper, first down in the vaulted guard-room, and then a rumour, and anon a widening murmur, the news was spread, until surely the very jackdaws on the battlements were saying to themselves, "Phra is going! Phra!—Phra is going!"

Yes! and the tidings spread to that fair floor of a hundred corridors, where the Norman-arched windows looked down four score feet upon the river winding amid its shining morning meadows, bringing a sigh to more than one silken pillow. It reached the unhappy, red-eyed Isobel, and presently she tripped down the twining stone staircase, the loose folds of her skirt thrown over her arm to free her pretty feet, and in her hand a scrap of writing, a "cartel" she called it, seeming newly opened.

She came to the sunny empty corridor where I stood alone, and touched me on the arm as I watched from a lattice my charger being armed and saddled in the courtyard underneath, and when I turned held out her hand to me in frank and simple fashion. How could I refuse the proffer of so fair a friendship? and, pulling my velvet cap from my head, I put her white fingers to my lips. And was it true, she asked with a sigh, I was really going that morning, and so suddenly? Only too true, I answered, and, saving her presence, not so sudden as my inclination prompted. Much I saw she wished to question the why and wherefore, but of this, as of nothing touching her stern sister, would I tell her.

So presently she came to her point, and, fingering that scroll she had, very downcast and blushful, said, "You are a good knight, Sir Stranger, and strong and experienced in arms."

"Your Ladyship's description wakes my ambition to deserve your words."

"And generous, I have noticed, and as indulgent to page and squire of tender years as you are the contrary to stronger folk."

"And if this were so, Madam," I asked, "what then?"

"Oh! only," she said, wondrous shy and frightened, "that I have here a cartel from a friend of mine, a youth of noble family, who has heard of thee, and would go to the wars in your company—as your comrade, I mean: that is, if you would take him."

"Why, damsel, the wars are free to everyone; but I am in no mood just now to tutor a young gallant in slitting Frenchmen's throats!"

"But this one, Sir, very particularly wishes to travel with you, of whose prowess he is so convinced. He has, alas! quarrelled with those at whose side he should most naturally ride—he will be no trouble; for my sake you must take him. And," said the cunning girl, standing on tiptoe to be the nearer to my ear, "he is rich, though friendless by a rash love—he will gladly see to both your horses and disburse your passage over to France, even for the honour of remembering that he did it."

Now, this touched me very nearly. One by one my rings had gone, and that morning, after paying scores and largess, in truth I had found my wallet completely empty once again! If this youth had money, even though it were but sufficient to buy corn for our chargers on the way, and pay the ferry over to yonder fair field of adventure, why, there was no denying he would be a very convenient travelling companion, and it would go hard but that I could teach him something in return. Thinking this, I lifted my eyes, and found those of Isobel watching the workings of my face with pretty cunning.

"In truth, maid, if thy friend has so much gold as would safely land us with King Edward in Flanders, why, I must confess that just at present that does greatly commend him to me. What sort of a man is he?"

This question seemed to overwhelm the lady, who blushed and hung her head like a poppy that has stood a week's drought.

"In truth, Sir," she murmured, "I do not know."

"Not know! Why, but you said he was your friend!"

"Oh! so I did. And, now I come to think of it, he is a tall youth—about my size and make."

"Well, then, I will have him—no doubt we shall grow as close together as boon companions should."

"Would that you might grow so close together as I could wish!" said the English girl, with a sigh I did not understand.

"And now, how am I to know this friend," I asked, "this slim and gentle youth? What is his name, and what his face?"

"I had near forgotten that; and it was like a woman, for they say they ever keep the most important matter to the last! This boy, for good reasons that I know but may not mention, has sworn a vow, after the fashion of the chivalry he delights in, not to show his face, nor to wear his honourable name, until some happier times shall come for him. He is in love—like many another—and does conceive his heart to be most desperately consumed thereby. Wherefore he has taken the name of Flamaucœur, and bears upon his shield a device to that effect. This alone will point him out to you, over and above the dropped visor, which no earthly power will make him lift until this war and quest of his be over. But you will know him, I feel in my heart, without consideration. Sir Knight, you will know this youth when you meet him, something in my innermost heart does tell me, even as I should know one that I loved or that loved me behind twenty thicknesses of steel. And now, good-bye, until we meet again!"

The fair maid gave me her hand as though to part, and then hesitated a moment. Presently she mustered up courage and said:—

"Thou bear'st me no ill-will for yonder wild meeting of ours?"

"Maiden, it is forgotten!"

"Well, let it be so. I do not know what possessed me. I was hurried down the stream of feeling like a leaf on a tide. 'Twas I that met thee there by the cedars, and yet it was not me. Something so wild and fierce, such a hot intruder spirit burnt within this poor circumference, that I think I was damnate and bewitched. Thou dost most clearly understand that this hot fit is over now?"

"I clearly understand!"

"And that I love thee no longer," quoth the lady, with a sigh, "or, at least, not near so much?"

"Madam, so I conceive it. Be at ease: it is sacred between us two, and I will forget."

"Thanks! a thousand thanks, even for the relief that cold forgetfulness does give me, and now again, Good-bye. Be gentle to Flamaucœur, and—and," burst out the poor girl, as her control forsook her—"if there is an eye in the whole of wide heaven, oh, may it watch thee! if ever prayers of mine can pierce to the seat of the Eternal, oh, may they profit thee! Gods! that my wishes were iron bars for thy dear body, and my salt tears could but rivet them! Good-bye! good-bye!" and, kissing my hands in a fierce outburst of weeping, that fair white girl turned and fled, and disappeared through the tapestries that screened the Norman archways.

Before nightfall I was down by the English coast and many a long league from the castle. Thoughtful and alone, my partings made, I had paced out from its gloomy archway, the gay feathers on my helmet-top near brushing the iron teeth of the portcullis lowering above, and my charger's hoofs falling as hollow on the echoing drawbridge as my heart beat empty to the sounds of happy life behind me. Away south went the pathway, trodden day after day by contingents of gallant troops from that knightly stronghold. Jove! one might have followed it at midnight: those jolly bands had made a trail through copse and greenwood, through hamlet and through heather, like the track of a storm-wind. They had beaten down grass and herbage, they had robbed orchards and spinneys, and here their wayside fires were still a-smouldering, and there waved rags upon the bushes, and broken shreds and baggage. Now and then, as I paced along, I saw in the hamlets the folk still looking southward, and standing gossiping on the week's wonders, the boys meanwhile careering in mock onset with broken spear-shafts or discarded trappings. Oh! 'twas easy enough to know which way my friends had gone!

So plain was the track, and so well did my good horse acknowledge it, that there was little for me to do but sit and chew the bitter cud of fancy. All through the hot afternoon, all through the bright sunshine and shining green bracken, did we saunter, back towards the grey sea I knew so well, back towards the void beginning of my wanderings, and as my sad thoughts turned to when I last had sat a charger in such woods as these, to my fair Saxon homestead, Editha, the abbey and its Abbot, my donning English mail and breaking spears for a smile from yon cold Peeress, with much more of like nature, went idly flittering through my head. But hardly a thought among all that motley crowd was there for Isobel or her tears, and my promised meeting with her playmate.

Thus it happened that as evening fell and found me still some two miles from where our troops lay camped along the shore, waiting to-morrow's ferrying across to France, I rode down the steep bank of a small river to a ford, and slowly waded through. There be episodes of action that live in our minds, and incidents of repose that recur with no less force. So, then—that placid evening stream has come before me again and again—in the hot tumult of onset and mêlée, in court and camp, in the cold of winter and in summer's warmth, I have ridden that ford once more. I have gone down sad and thoughtful as I did, my loose reins on my charger's arching neck, watching the purple shine of the water where it fretted and broke in the evening light against his fetlocks: again and again I have listened to the soft lisp of the stream as he drank of that limpid trough, and I have seen in its cool fresh mirror my own tall image, my waving crimson plumes, and the one white star of the evening above, reflected upon it. And yet, if these things of a remote yesterday are fresh in my mind, even more so is my meeting with the slim gallant whose figure rose before me as I emerged from the ford.

As my good English charger bore me up from the hollow, on the brow of the opposite rise was a mounted figure standing out clear and motionless against the yellow glow of the sunset. At first I thought it would be some wandering spearman bound on a like errand with myself, for more than one or two such had passed that day. But something in the steadfast interest of that silent horseman roused my curiosity even before I was near enough to see the colour of his armour or the device upon his shield. Up we scrambled up that sandy heathery scar, the strong sinews of my war-horse playing like steel cordage under my thighs as he lifted me and my armour up the gravelly path, and then, as we topped the rise and came into the evening breeze, that strange warrior advanced and held out a hand.

Never in all my experience had I known a knight extend the palm of friendship to another so demure and downcast. "Truth!" I thought to myself, "this friend of Isobel's is, in fact, as she said, the most modest-mannered soldier who ever took a place in the rough game of war!" But I was pledged to like him, and therefore, in the most hearty manner possible, as we came up knee to knee I slapped my heavy hand into his extended fingers, and welcomed him loudly as a long-looked-for comrade. And in truth he was a very pretty fellow, whose gentle presence grew upon me after that first meeting each hour we lived together. He seemed, as far as I could judge, no more than five-and-twenty years of age, yet even that was but a guess, for his armour was complete from top to toe, his visor was down, and there was, indeed, naught to judge by but a certain slightness of limb and suppleness that spoke of no more mature years. In height this gallant was very passable enough, and his helmet, with its nodding plumes, added some grace and inches to his stature, while his pale-grey mail was beautifully fashioned and moulded, and spoke through every close joint and cunning finished link of a young but well-proportioned soldier.

The arms this warrior carried were better suited to his strength than to that of the man who rode beside him. His lance was long and of polished inlay, while mine beside it was like the spear of Goliath to a fisher's hazel wand. His dagger was better for cutting the love-knot on a budget of sonnets than for disburdening foemen's spirits of their mortal shackles. His cross-hilted sword was so light it made me sigh to look at it. On his shield was a heart wrapped in flames, most cunningly painted, and expressive enough in those days, when every man took a pride in being as vulnerable to women as he was unapproachable among men.

But who am I that I should judge that gentle knight by myself—by me, whose sinews countless fights have but matured, who have been blessed by the gods with bulk and strength above other mortals? Why should I measure his brand-new lance, gleaming in the pride of virgin polish, against the stern long spear I carried; or that dainty brand of his, that mayhap his tender maid had belted on him for the first time some hours before, with such a broad blade as long use had made lighter to my hand than a lady's distaff?

Before we had paced a mile, Flamaucœur had proved himself the sprightliest companion who ever enlivened a dull road with wit and laughter. At first 'twas I that spoke, for he had not one word in all the world to say—he was so shy. But when I twitted him for this, and laughed, and asked him of his ladylove, and how she had stood the parting—how many tears there had been, and whether they all were hers; and whose heart was that upon his shield, his own or the damsel's; and so on, in bantering playfulness, I got down to the mettle of that silent boy. He winced beneath my laughter for a little time, and fidgeted upon his saddle, and then the gentle blood in his veins answered, as I hoped it would, and he turned and gave me better than I offered. Such a pretty fellow in wordy fence I never saw: his tongue was like a woman's, it was so hard to silence. When I thought I had him at disadvantage on a jest, he burked the point of my telling argument, and struck me below my guard; when I would have pinned him to some keen inquiry regarding that which he did not wish to tell, he turned questioner with swift adroitness, and made—quicker than it takes to write—his inquisitor the humble answerer to his playful malice. He was better at that fence than I, there could be no doubt, and very speedily his nimble tongue, which sounded so strange and pleasant in the hollow of his helmet, had completely mastered mine. So, with a laugh, I did acknowledge to the conquest.

Whereon that generous youth was pleased, I saw, and laid aside his coyness, and chattered like a mill-stream among the gravels on an idle Sunday. He turned out both shrewd and witty, with a head stuffed full of romance and legend, just such as one might have who had spent a young life listening to troubadours and minstrels. And I liked him none the less because he trimmed the gross fables of that time to such a decent shape. He told me one or two that I had heard before, although he knew it not. And as I had heard them from the licentious lips of courtly minstrels they are not fit to write or tell, but my worthy wayfarer clipped and purged them so adroitly, and turned them out so fair and seemly, all with such a nice unconsciousness, I scarce could recognise them. He was a most gentle-natured youth, and there was something in his presence, something in the half-frankness he put forth, and something strange about him which greatly drew me. Now you would think, to listen to him, he was all a babbling stream as shallow as could be, and then, anon, a turn of sad wisdom or a sigh set you wondering, as when that same stream runs deep into the shadows, and you hear it fret and fume with gathering strength far away in unknown depths of mother Earth. A most enticing, a most perplexing comrade.

Beguiling the way in this fashion, and liking my new ally better and better as we went, we came a little after nightfall on a wet and windy evening to the hamlet near the sea, where the rearguard of the English troops were collected for ferrying over to France. Here we halted and sought food and shelter, but neither were to had for the asking. That little street of English dwellings was crowded with hungry troopers. They were camping by their gleaming watch-fires all along the grassy ways, so full was every lodgment, while every yellow window of the dim gambled alehouse in the midst shone into the wet, dark night, and every room within was replete with stamping, clanking, noisy gallants. Their chargers filled the yard, and were picketed a furlong down the muddy road, that sloped to the murmuring unseen sea, and there was not space, it seemed, for one single other horse or rider in the whole friendly village.

But the insidious Flamaucœur found a way and place. He sought out the master of the inn himself, and, unheeding of his curt refusals, made request so cunning and used his money-pouch so liberal that that strong and surly yeoman, with much to-do, found us a loft to sleep in, which was a bed-room better than the wayside, though still but a rough one. Then Flamaucœur waylaid the buxom, hurrying housewife, and, on an evening when many a good gentleman was going supperless to bed, got us a loaf of white bread and a wooden bowl of milk, the which we presently shared most comrade-like, my friend lifting his visor so much as might suffice to eat, but yet not enough to show his face. He waylaid a lad, and, for a coin or two and a little of his sweet-voiced cajoling, got our steeds watered and sheltered, though many another lordly, sleek-limbed beast stood all night unwashed, unminded. A most persuasive youth was Flamaucœur!

And then, our frugal supper made and our horses seen to, we went to bed. Diffident, ingenious young knight! He made my couch (while I was not by) long and narrow—no bigger than for one—of all the soft things he could lay his hand on—as though, forsooth, I were some tender flower—and for himself hardly spread a horsecloth on the bare floor!

Now, when I came up and found this done, without a word I sent the boy to go and see what the night was like, and if the moon yet showed, or if it rained, and, when he went forthwith, pulled that couch to bits, respreading it so it was broad enough for two good comrades side by side. Ah! And when Flamaucœur came back, I rated him soundly, telling him that, though it was set in the laws of arms that a young knight should show due deference to an older, yet all that comrades had of hard or soft was equally dividable, both board and bed, and good-luck and misfortune. And he was amenable, though still a little strange, and unbuckled his armour by our dim rushlight, and then—poor tired youth!—with that iron mask upon his head, in his quilted underwear, threw himself upon the couch, and slept almost before he could straighten out those shapely limbs of his.

And I presently lay down by his side and slept, while all through my dreams went surging the wildest fancies of tilt and tourney and lady's love. And now I heard in the uproar of the restless village street and the neighing of the chargers at their pickets the noise of battle and of onset. And then I thought I had, on some unknown field, five thousand spearmen overset against a hundred times as many; and while my heart bounded proudly in answer to that disadvantage, and I rode up and down our glittering ranks speaking words of strength and courage to those scanty heroes, waving my shining sword in the sun that shone for victory on us and curbing my fretting charger's restless valour, methought, somehow, the words dried up upon my lips, and the proud murmur of my firm-set veterans turned to a low moaning wail, and a grey mist of tears put out the sun, and black grief drank up the warriors; and while I wrestled with that melancholy, Blodwen, my Princess, was sitting by my side, cooling my hot forehead with her calm immortal hand, and calling me, with smiling accent, "dull, unwitful, easily beguiled," and all the time that young gallant by me lay limp, supine, asleep, and soulless.

So passed the chequered fancies of the night, and the earliest dawn found us up in arms, and ready for sterner things.

Again I had to owe to Flamaucœur's ready wit and liberal purse precedence for our needs above all the requirements of the many good knights who would have crossed with the haste they could, but had, perforce, to wait. It was he who got us a vessel sufficient for our needs when the fisher folk were swearing there was not a ship to be hired for twenty miles up or down the coast. In this we embarked with our horses, and one or two other gentlemen we knew, and in a few hours' sailing the English shore went down and the sunny cliffs of Normandy rose ahead of us.

Will you doubt but that I stood thoughtful and silent as the green and silver waves were shivered by our dancing prow, and that strange, familiar land rose up before us? I, that British I, who had seen Cæsar's galleys, heavy with Umbrian and Etrurian, put out from that very shore: I, who had stood on the green cliffs of Harold's kingdom and shaken a Saxon javelin towards that home of Norman tyranny: I, this knightly, steel-bound I, stood and watched that country grow upon us, with thoughts locked in my heart there were none to listen to and none to share.

Oh! it was passing strange, and I did not rouse me until our iron keel went gently grinding up the Norman gravel, and our vessel was beached upon the hostile shore.

(*To be continued.*)

AVENGING A SLIGHT.

Tommy Livermore (at his brother's wedding): "I reckon when he finds that he'll wish he'd invited me along with th' rest."

To Cure Skin Diseases.—Sulpholine Lotion drives away all eruptions, pimples, blotches, redness, and disfigurements, leaving a clear, spotless skin. Bottles, everywhere.—[Advt.]

HOW THE WORLD WAGS

THE QUEEN proceeded from Windsor Castle to Osborne on the morning of the 19th with Prince and Princess Henry of Battenberg. Their journey was performed amid a heavy fall of snow, which, in the Solent, was so blinding that the ships had to signal each other by means of foghorns. Her Majesty spends Christmas with her family in the Isle of Wight.

The Queen, the day she left for Osborne, unveiled in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, a marble statue of the Emperor Frederick, executed by the late Sir E. Boehm. Her Majesty was accompanied by the

STATUE OF THE LATE EMPEROR FREDERICK IN ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR.
BY THE LATE SIR EDGAR BOEHM, R.A.

Prince of Wales and several other members of the Royal family. Wreaths had been sent by the Empress Frederick and by the German Emperor and Empress, which were arranged, with others, at the foot of the statue. The Dean of Windsor conducted a short religious service. We give a photographic Illustration of the late Sir Edgar Boehm's remarkably lifelike statue of that true knight, the late Emperor Frederick. It is from the photograph taken by Messrs. Robinson and Sons, 172, Regent-street. The memorial is of white marble, and about 10ft. high. It stands under the Canon Pearson window, in the south aisle, and in close proximity to the subway leading to the Royal vault beneath the famous Albert Chapel. The statue had been draped with blue cloth by the employés of the Lord Chamberlain's department, under Mr. Leonard Coleman, previous to the ceremony, and in the space immediately opposite chairs had been arranged for her Majesty and the Royal family and suite.

The Prince and Princess of Wales make merry with their family, as usual, at Sandringham this Christmas, and give the customary Christmas feast to their tenants.

The Marquis of Salisbury (who spends Christmas with his family at Hatfield) has become a vice-president of the National Health Society. The Marchioness is a life-member, and has contributed ten guineas to its funds. Under the auspices of the society, two courses of lectures arranged by Lady Florence Cecil, on "Nursing the Sick" and "Homely Talks with Wives and Mothers," have recently been given at Hatfield. Lady Salisbury gave her patronage to the lectures, and attended several of them personally.

Mr. W. H. Smith and family left London on Dec. 19 for Torquay, where they will spend Christmas.

In order to welcome the Duchess of Edinburgh to the West of England, a movement is on foot to give in her Royal Highness's honour a grand naval ball, which will be held on Jan. 23, the anniversary of her wedding-day. The Duke and Duchess are expected at Devonport about Jan. 15.

The Empress Frederick and Princess Margaret left Berlin for Kiel to spend Christmas with Prince and Princess Henry of Prussia. They will return to Berlin soon after the New Year.

The Emperor William has a baby boy as a Christmas-box. The Empress and the infant Prince are doing well. The Presidents of the Reichstag and Landtag and the Prussian Cabinet have sent congratulatory addresses to their Majesties. In the course of conversation recently the Emperor said that he was quite resolved to visit England again next year, if it could be managed. He has instructed Count Eulenburg to report to him in detail on the prospects of the German Exhibition to be held in London during 1891, and shows the keenest interest in the project now that the leaders of art and industry in this country have joined the German Committee and intend to exhibit.

The death of the Duchess of Northumberland took place at Alnwick Castle on Dec. 18.

Mr. Gladstone took cold in London, but was able on the 19th inst. to attend service at Hawarden Church. All the members of the family gather at Hawarden for Mr. Gladstone's birthday on the 29th.

Mr. John Morley had an interview and dined with Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden Castle on his way to London from Dublin.

Lord Tennyson is in excellent health. The Hon. Hallam Tennyson writes to a correspondent that, notwithstanding the severe weather and his advanced age, his Lordship, who is staying at Farringford, Freshwater, Isle of Wight, takes his usual walk every day.

The funeral of the late General Sir Edmund A. Whitmore, K.C.B., for some years Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, took place on Dec. 18, at Brompton Cemetery. The Duke of Cambridge was most desirous to attend the interment, but was prevented by a severe cold, and his Royal Highness was represented by Colonel Lane and Colonel Augustus Fitz-George.

Mr. Parnell has been unable to take further part in the contest in North Kilkenny, owing to the injury to his eye caused by the quarrel at Castlecomer, but meetings were held on his behalf at Freshford, and outside his hotel in Kilkenny. At the latter, Mr. J. Redmond denounced Mr. Parnell's 'leading opponents as responsible for the outrage. The Anti-Parnellites held a meeting at Freshford, at which Mr. Davitt and Dr. Tanner, M.P., recounted the part they took in the conflict at Ballinakill. While regretting the injury done to Mr. Parnell at Castlecomer, they fixed the responsibility for this, as well as for the previous collision, on the Parnellites.

A meeting in support of the majority of the Irish Party was held at Cork, one hundred and thirty priests being among those present. Mr. Justin McCarthy claimed that the action of his party had been ratified in Ireland, and he challenged the Parnellite members to resign their seats and obtain the judgment of their constituencies. As to their future attitude in the House of Commons, he declared that his party would remain absolutely Independent, and would not absorb itself with, or attach itself to, any English Party whatever. Mr. T. Sexton, M.P., said the crisis had not come a day too soon, for people would be driven to ask whether, if they had won Home Rule, the tyranny of Mr. Parnell would not have been as bad as that of Mr. Balfour.

The court-martial sitting at Devonport on the survivors of her Majesty's ship Serpent came to the conclusion, on the 17th, that the loss of the vessel was due to an error of judgment on the part of those responsible for the navigation, for not having shaped a course sufficiently to the westward.

The trial of Mr. G. W. Butterfield on the charge of libelling Mr. Harry Marks was concluded, at the Central Criminal Court, on the 17th. In charging the jury, the Recorder told them to consider whether the plea of justification had been proved, and whether the publication was for the public benefit. In reply to the usual question, the foreman of the jury said they found the prisoner not guilty. His further stated that they found that the alleged libel was true, that the plea of justification was made out, and that the publication was for the public benefit. After an animated discussion between Mr. Mathews and Mr. Gill, the Recorder said he entirely disagreed with the verdict, and that as to the first part of it, there was absolutely no evidence to support it. It was ordered that Mr. Marks should pay the costs of the defence.

Samuel J. Harvell was tried at the Central Criminal Court on the 18th for the murder of his wife at Battersea. The prisoner had suspicions, which, it appears, were totally unfounded, with regard to her conduct, and deliberately shot her, and then gave himself up to the police. The jury found him guilty, but recommended him to mercy on account of the circumstances under which the murder was committed. Mr. Justice Day sentenced him to death.

A petition to the Home Secretary in favour of Mrs. Piercey has been delivered at the Home Office. It is signed by over two thousand persons. The Home Secretary has decided that a medical inquiry, authorised by the Criminal Lunatics Act, 1884, shall be held into the state of the convict's mind.

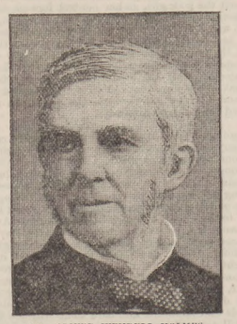
YOUR CHILD'S HAIR can be made still prettier. HINDE'S HAIR CURLERS WAVE without heat. 6d. the box everywhere; or seven stamps from HINDE'S (LTD.), Birmingham.—[ADVT.]

"THE TWO LITTLE CUPS OF TEA" ALMANACK for 1891 given away to all who apply to Horniman's Agents, Confectioners, &c. HORNIMAN'S TEA in Packets. Best on earth.—[ADVT.]

BOOK LOVERS' GOSSIP.

"Over the Teacups."

DR. HOLMES, the famous Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, having chatted with us so entertainingly over our morning beverage, is ready in old age to chat with us over our tea. But although Johnson uttered some of his wisest and shrewdest sayings in the interval between the nineteenth and twentieth



DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

cup, it is not usually from the tea-table that we expect the profoundest thoughts on life or the brightest flashes of wit and humour. Alas that one should say it! but Dr. Holmes at eighty is not the man he was when he charmed us with those early books of his. Young no doubt he is still in spirit, youthful in all that pertains to his relations with men; but when he comes to write, we miss the wit and the wisdom which make

The "Autocrat,"

the "Professor," and the "Poet" three of the books which we ever delight to take up and ever regret to put down. After all, it does not matter. To no writer is it given to do more than a certain limited amount of good work, and this Dr. Holmes has long since done. We do not count his curious stories, his "Elsie Venner" and his "Guardian Angel," as masterpieces of literature, and "Over the Teacups" (6s., Sampson Low) will rank with these, as a book that is interesting on account of its author—one of the most fascinating of modern men.

"The Vicar of Wakefield."

I don't know why Dr. Holmes should suggest the most famous of Goldsmith's works to me. He has nothing in common with Goldsmith's character, at least, although his style is in many points akin. And surely all we know of the New England author gives us a picture of benignity and charm which recalls the famous Dr. Primrose. I need not say that in Dr. Primrose we have simple and childlike characteristics impossible to a man of the autocrat's genius and worldly experience. However this may be, I want here to commend one of the daintiest of all editions of the "Vicar" (6s., Macmillan), a beautifully printed volume, with illustrations by Hugh Thomson. If the book comes into your hands, you will not easily put it down. You will once again follow the adventures and misfortunes of the Primrose family, and surely with more zest than you have ever followed them before. Hugh Thomson's illustrations illuminate every page. Now we see the Vicar exhorting his parishioners to matrimony, now in zealous controversy with his friend on the great Whiston controversy, and later in the dire distresses of a prison. Not since Dickens was illustrated by some of the artists with whom we always associate his works has any novel been seized upon with so much perfection of understanding as Mr. Thomson has given to Goldsmith's story.

"Essays of Elia."

Another pretty little Christmas present is an edition of Lamb's "Essays," with an etching by Herbert Railton and an Introduction by Augustine Birrell (2s. 6d., J. M. Dent and Co.) It is one out of a hundred editions of Lamb, but it is one of the most attractive. What can we say about it? "Nothing, we may feel well assured," says Mr. Birrell, "could cause the author of the 'Essays of Elia' more genuine annoyance than to be clumsily praised, or raised with shouting to a higher pedestal than the one in the possession of which his own ripe judgment could confirm him." And so it is. Perhaps the last word of any moment has been written about Lamb. Let us be content to read and enjoy the "Essays of Elia."

Emin Pasha.

It is a far cry from the books of which I have written to that story of African adventure and African intrigue of which we have heard so much of late. But Mr. Mounteney-Jephson's "Emin Pasha and the Rebellion at the Equator" (18s., Sampson Low) deserves a word even now. The book touches other ground than those of Stanley and his Rear-Guard, and less disputable ground. Jephson left Stanley's party, and spent some time with Emin in his Equatorial Province. He had opportunities of studying the man's character at every turn, and the result is a pleasing one. "He told me of his life," says Mr. Jephson, "of his hopes and fears, his struggles and disappointments, and all with a simple earnestness which touched me with remorse when I thought how often I had allowed myself to be irritated by his want of energy and decision." The best part of this book, however, is the glimpses which it gives of life among some of the African tribes. In spite of the abundant recent literature on the subject, there is much to be learnt from Mr. Mounteney-Jephson. TATLER.

The Home Secretary has reduced the sentence on Walter Hargan, who was convicted for shooting two men at Kingsland, from twenty years' penal servitude to twelve months' imprisonment.

A CHRISTMAS FAIRY STORY.

THE GOOD AND BAD FAIRIES, AND HOW THE GOOD TRIUMPHED.

My dear Children, you asked me to tell you why it is that you are all so healthy, so full of good spirits, and so happy in all things, when there are so many that we meet every day that have none of these blessings, but who are thin and ill, every step they take painful, and seemingly quite incapable of enjoying this beautiful world of ours.

I will tell you. It is because you are guarded by a wonderful Talisman, which has shielded you from your earliest infancy, and which is the gift of the Good Fairies, who spend all their time in watching and keeping from harm the little ones in every home that possesses it; for everyone can have it if they will only ask for it, and their children will grow up healthy and strong, as you have done.

But to make you understand it all, we must go back a long time—many, many years before you were born—when the Wicked Fairies had it all their own way, and there were none to say them nay. You have all heard of the Wicked Fairies who used to take the dear little babies, just born, out of their cots, and carry them ever so far away, leaving in their place poor little shrivelled-up mites, who looked more like bags of bones than children.

Especially at that time there were two—oh! such Wicked Fairies; nothing good about them, whose names I will tell you presently, who always were trying how much harm they could do, and never were so happy as when they were causing some misery or other to the Earth Children as our race was called in those long-past days; so, whenever they could, they would steal away some dear little plump, crowing, darling little baby, and leave in its place a poor, wizened, miserable little thing, that everyone said was a "changeling" directly it was seen.

Did you ever hear of anything so wicked and cruel?

How long this would have gone on no one can say. Perhaps, instead of sitting now, this Christmas night, all of us around the warm fireside, so happy each of you listening to mamma's "Fairy Story," one and all of you might have been far away from home and friends, down in the depths of the earth, digging and delving to please the Wicked Fairies who had stolen you away, and who never say a kind word, and who would tear and pinch you for very mischief. Are you not thankful that it is not so?

Luckily for you, there are Good Fairies as well as bad ones—so kind and true, just the reverse of those I have told you of—who pass all their time in doing good and being kind to the Earth Children; and there were also two of these, whose names you shall also soon know, who could not bear to see the way in which the Wicked Fairies treated their pets, and so they set to work and thought, and thought, and thought how they could prevent their being stolen away and treated so badly. At last they discovered that they must find a certain Talisman, which was of such a wondrous nature that whoever had it in their house where they lived would be quite free from the attacks of all the Wicked Fairies, especially the two that did so much harm. Such a wonderful Talisman this! No one before had ever heard of such a thing—not large, encased in white paper with cabalistic letters on it, and yet it not only protects children from every ill, but it provides them with delicious food, which never disagrees with them, and soon makes even a changeling plump and strong. Then the question was, How is this Talisman to be found? Where is it? Where could it be hidden? Surely, nowhere on earth? Such a treasure must be hidden away in the moonbeams, or on some distant star. So off they went from star to star, then to the moon, but the man in it did not know anything about the "Talisman"; so at last they were nearly tired with their search, and almost gave up hope, when, having come back again to earth, they saw a dear old wise, clever physician, surrounded with books even more clever than himself, who for years had been trying to find the same Talisman that they had themselves tried so hard to find, and now he had nearly found it, and, indeed, would have quite found it, but that it could not be found by mortal man without the Fairies' help.

So, at once, the two Good Fairies, whose names were Knowledge and Carefulness, went and sat one on each side of the good doctor, prompting him and helping him on; and soon the Talisman appeared, and the good doctor gave it to all his patients; and all their children became well and strong. And all the Wicked Fairies, with the two whose names were Ignorance and Neglect, fled away, utterly powerless for harm, except to those who would not keep the Talisman. And, although there are many foolish ones who have not even yet obtained it, there are thousands up men and women too—who hourly bless the good Physician and the Fairies through whose exertions they are saved from ill-health, Disease, and Death. And you, my dear children, take to heart this little story, and, as you grow up, be sure you continue friends with the Good Fairies I have told you of, for you will always find Knowledge a powerful friend in need, and one with Knowledge combined with Carefulness you will escape almost every ill that can come upon you. And what is this Talisman, possessing all these marvellous properties? Can you guess? You have seen it often enough. Why, a tin of Dr. Ridge's Patent Cooked Food—a Talisman, indeed, giving Health, Strength, and Comfort, and Quiet Nights.—[ADVT.]

THE RACING WORLD

Until my editor requested me to pull out some sporting paragraphs with a

Strong Christmas Flavour,

or, rather, I should say, until I endeavoured to follow the request, which is really rather more, I was not aware how dreadfully I had neglected business in that reasonable and sporting connection. Racing affairs, as a rule, at Yuletide at their dullest. Because, you see—putting aside steeplechasing, hurdle-racing, and hunters' flat-racing—there is no just cause or incentive why trainers should be at work except in a mild way. The first flat-race under Jockey Club rules cannot take place till March is far advanced, and if one wants to keep the old 'uns moving so that they do not grow above themselves, and the young 'uns' education must not be interrupted if possible, still no absolute need presses. Of course, one might rake up yarns of December trials for classic three-year-old races, when yearlings—as they were on Dec. 31, to be two-year-olds by Jan. 1—were roughed up, and big bets booked according to results. But big bets on yearlings are not to be had nowadays. At intervals, some amateur who has read of old-fashioned bookmaking on the Derby, and cannot see why, on paper, the speculation should not pay, has, a try. In ninety cases out of a hundred he has an useful book on the day. In the other nine his volume may look all right, but he finds the winner take all his field money, and a bit more at the finish.

With deep regret I confess that I cannot bring to memory even one genuine trial of flat-racers at Christmas. I once was deeply interested in an affair of that sort, which was to come off after church

On Christmas Day.

But to a great extent postponement of the spin, in which a youngster who, thanks to open weather, had been brought along beautifully, was to be put alongside a very smart little 'un from neighbouring stables, did not matter. This was not for a regular treat, you know, but a sort of guesswork gallop, in which none of the babies was to be distressed. In the end all came right. The baby in our stable showed rare speed, and made a great name later; but the gallop itself was not brought off, though a dreadful muddle was. Overnight, the waits got themselves filled up unduly early. The trombone and the hautboy had four or five rough-and-tumble rounds outside our turnpike-gates. Of course the 'pike-keeper must mix the story up, and as is, or rather was, 'pikemen's habits, tell all and sundry who came his way his version. Now it happened that he was rather worse filled up than the musicianers, and, seeing through many glasses very darkly, imagined vain things. No one, on Christmas forenoon, was permitted to pass his gate without being told, in strict confidence, that—yes, no such a pitch had he worked on his imagination—

Tom Sayers and the Benicia Boy,

or otherwise John Carmel Heenan, were to fight on the quiet at three o'clock: venue, our gallop! In all innocence we turned out after luncheon—say, at half past two—when we expected all the villagers to be sleeping off dinner and drinks, and the touts sure to be smoking the most of landlord's indulgence in the matter of "Time, gentlemen, if you please!" The swell jockey of his time who favoured us with a visit for the special purpose of running through the stable and telling us how we had gone since the back end, was the first to notice unusual activity in our yard. "Is there a fight coming off?" asked he, as he looked over what, in latter-day racing slang, are called "the heads." And nice heads they were!

Old Pugs

from every hole and corner had scented the battle from afar. The veteran Ben Bubb, with his dreadful ramshackle cart, had got the machine there, not to mention a foundered blind grey, a dozen miles. How did he learn the news in time for the journey? How did Tappy Tickle, who came two miles farther from out of a truck in a goods train from Salisbury, and the Lame Thick'un, who was permanently retained at another training establishment fifteen miles off as the crow flies? How did the news, false as it was, get their quarters and fetch them? To do not less than justice to the Lame Thick'un, he came on two counts: First, to see the fight. If he had to do twice fifteen miles on his hands and knees, he would have been there, the Thick'un explained; but he was present also with a due sense of responsibility attaching to the fighting guardian of any racing stable.

The Mill

first was his motto; after that, proper scientific protection of all racing stables. How did all these dozens of other warriors of the Ring, with harangers-on all complete, get in the know? No one could believe. Anyone educated in the craft would not wonder at all, seeing that there is a sort of telegraphy, which gives fighters' friends the tips, beating electricity, and that you could not hope to keep such gentry out of the Bank of England if only through a skylight, defying the British grenadiers, their bayonets, hand-grenades, and all their works. I know—*mot qui parle*. Well, to spare you recital of intermediate incident, we proceeded slowly and dubiously up the Downs—slowly, because the lanes was thronged with people; dubiously, since we could hardly hope to bring off even a rough gallop while such a mob was about. Arrived on the training-ground, there were Messrs. Bubb and Tickle, the Thick'un and Pullson, with their coats off, hammering stakes out of our spinney, and knotting together ropes to make a ring. The commissary ought to have been there earlier, they said, to pitch the tents; but as, no doubt, something had gone wrong with the proper ropes and stakes, they, the volunteers, would see all straight against the fighters came. By half past three, five hundred people were on Cockshoot Hill,

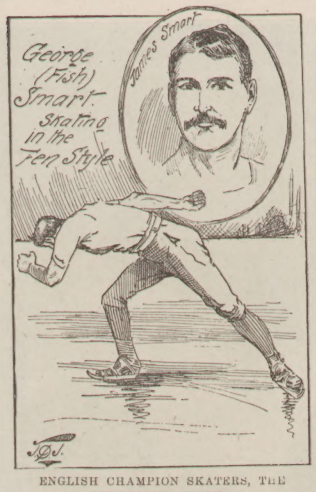
Eager for the Fray,

and they did not clear off till dark. We wasted our time. They wasted theirs, and were not particular how they remarked on the fact or broke windows. One swell jockey left next day thoroughly disgusted with being made a fool of, as he said, but he might just as well have stopped for his own sake. The youngster we fancied came out uncommonly well when, with a clear field, he was given a three-furlong spin, and was probably one of the best two-years-olds ever seen, certainly one of the best of the last thirty years when he won the Goodwood Nursery.

That, Mr. Editor, is all the Christmas racing stories I know, unless you would like to hear how, when a lad, I went to Kingsbury, or somewhere down that way,

On a Boxing Day,

and found all the thieves in London on the spot—and at work. I do not speak from that experience only, because I was "down that way" often afterwards, but the occasion is impressed on my memory, as I got on the course when horses were finishing a steeplechase, and in hurrying out of their way I lost both my Oxford shoes in the brick-earth clay. My opinion was, at that time, formed hastily, like King David's regarding mendacity. But, at my leisure, I can declare that the good old-fashioned gate-money racing was all thieving. If it was not, why were special fees charged to professors of the various departments of robbery? The man with the roulette-table had to pay extra; thimble-riggers were treated to a special tariff; the usual special price to three-card men was five shillings a mob, besides gate; and so on. What the scale for pickpockets might be I cannot say; but welshing was a recognised and, therefore, taxable industry. My account of Christmas suburban sport might not be as Christmassy as is desirable, so I will not follow the subject further, but wait for better times and next week, when, let us trust, the weather may be more open than it has been these three weeks.



ENGLISH CHAMPION SKATERS, THE BROTHERS SMART.

THE WORLD OF PASTIME

As I write, we are in the midst of what is termed a

Good Old-Fashioned Winter,

and Englishmen are enjoying the dearly loved—perhaps because so rarely enjoyed—pastime of skating, the humbler class, many of whom, poor fellows! would, no doubt, far rather be doing some work, taking their share of the enjoyment in the primitive pastime of sliding. The evolution of the skate, with its "Dowler" blade and obtuse angles, from the act of sliding will never be traced, though we are in possession of the first step, which was the tying of bones on the feet, and ancient chroniclers tell us that great speed was attained by this means. But in those days the hob-nailed sole was not known; and to this appanage of the labourer's *tout ensemble* must be traced the development of the slide. Plenty of exercise in frosty weather is what keeps one warm and well, and it is doubtful if anything is more calculated to produce these results than a good bout at sliding, with plenty of eager ones behind, urging one to "keep the pot a-boiling." The enthusiastic slider envies the skater nothing, and, within a limited sphere, the slide presents scope for development and variation. It is a curious fact in natural history that the butcher's boy is generally the crack slider, and he will show how to revolve the body during the slide, slide on one leg, stoop so as to almost sit on the ice, and, while in that position, deliver what is called the "postman's knock"—a feat duly immortalised by Dickens in "Pickwick."

Speed Skating

now occupies a deal of attention, and the capital frost has enabled contests to be decided wherever ice and sport are considered compatible. For the third time only since 1880 the

Amateur Championship

of the United Kingdom has been decided. The race took place on Thursday, Dec. 18, on Lingay Fen, Cambridgeshire, and ended in favour of W. Loveday, the champion for 1888-89, there being no race last winter. There can be but little to choose between

W. Loveday and his Brother,

J. Loveday, for these two were drawn together in the first heat, and made a dead-heat of it, in the good time of

5 min. 16 1-5 sec.,

which is only fractionally worse than 3 min. 30 sec. per mile, the distance skated being a

Mile and a Half.

Under the new system, a wrinkle taken from the astute Dutchmen, those making the fastest times in their heats (only two skate in a heat) are drawn in pairs, he who makes the best time on this occasion being the winner. This is to prevent collusion on the part of two or more competitors, a state of affairs not unknown both here and in Holland. M. Loveday covered the distance on the second occasion in 5 min. 26 2-5 sec., his brother taking 5 min. 29 sec.

Holland

has been the scene of great excitement in the skating world, a great meeting, at which very valuable prizes were given, taking place on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of last week at Heerenveen. It is certain that the

Fastest Skaters in the World,

both amateur and professional, were present.

Joseph Donoghue,

the speedy American amateur, was present, and on the Wednesday won the Amateur One-Mile

Championship of the Netherlands

in 3 min. 9 4-5 sec., the next nearest competitor being a German skater named Landahl, whose time was 3 min. 42 sec.

On this day a quarter-mile professional race was decided, and the Dutch skaters had it all their own way, as they invariably do in short races. In skating, a quarter of a mile is about the same as a race of a hundred and twenty yards would be in running. George See started, but was a long way behind.

On Dec. 18, however, England was amply avenged, for

James Smart

won the one-mile in the fast time of 3 min. 7 sec., the Dutch champion, M. Kingma, being second, in 3 min. 8 4-5 sec., while George See was third, in 3 min. 11 3-5 sec. Thus has been amply vindicated the assertion made by myself and others that

If Englishmen Could Only Get the Practice,

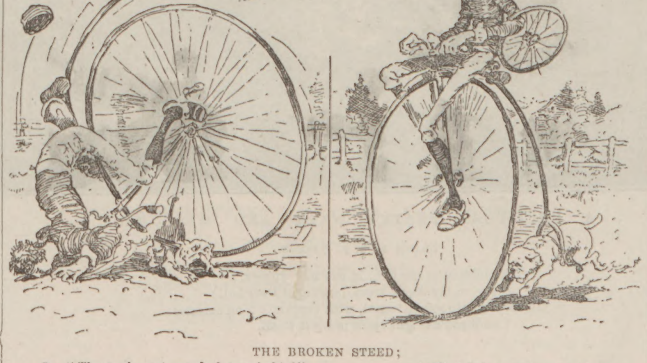
they can skate as fast as anyone, and this practice both Smart and See were able to enjoy this year at St. Moritz, though for a brief period only. Socially, the English professional skaters are quite the equal of the American amateur champion, who enjoys the advantage of having expenses granted him that have no practical limit where skating is concerned.

Football.

With skating so universal, it is indeed surprising that football should be possible; but some important matches have been decided. Teams from both Oxford and Cambridge have been on tour. At Edinburgh, where one would expect King Frost to reign supreme, if anywhere, Oxford beat Edinburgh University by a goal and two tries to nothing. The Cambridge Association team were just beaten by Aston Villa by two goals to one, but on the next day had a bad reverse at Bootle, where they were beaten by eight goals to none.

Recent Billiards

has been notable for the fine spot-barred play of J. Roberts jun., Peall, and North, the two latter frequently making breaks of between 200 and 300, sometimes, indeed, exceeding the higher figure. I also notice that a third Cook, William, son of the ex-champion, is following closely in his father's footsteps, and won a handicap "tournament" between eight players by winning every game. So far he plays as an amateur. BANSHEE.



THE BROKEN STEED;
Or, "Those who get people into mischief"—— ——"Must help people out of it."

A FAIR TRIAL.

"Gentlemen,—Having discovered the extraordinary efficacy of Guy's Tonic, through the cure of a dear friend of mine, who suffered from a disease that had baffled all ordinary modes of treatment, I decided to take it myself, and so pleased am I with the result that I send you this as my verdict of its value. It is many, many years since I was quite well, for I cannot remember a time when I did not feel an uncomfortable fulness after eating, with a sour rising in my mouth, a foul tongue, and most obstinate constipation. I also had loss of appetite, headache, dimness of vision, giddiness, palpitation, difficulty of breathing, with distressingly low spirits. All this suffering I now know arose from bad indigestion, combined with faulty action of the liver. For such complaints Guy's Tonic is vastly superior to anything else; it commenced to cure from the very first.

THE VERDICT.

"I am, yours faithfully, "W. S. ANDREWS."

SUPERIOR TO ALL.

Guy's Tonic

Indigestion and Nervousness.—These troublesome complaints are cured more speedily by Guy's Tonic than by any known remedy, a few doses invariably accomplishing more than a prolonged course of any other treatment. For loss of appetite, pain after eating, and sluggish liver, Guy's Tonic is superior and preferable to all other preparations. For restoring nervous and debilitated constitutions, removing brain weariness, nerve waste, languor, and despondency, the most implicit confidence can be placed in this simple, safe, and efficient remedy.

Dr. Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., writes:—

"As a stimulus to weak digestion, Guy's Tonic will act admirably, while in cases of painful digestion and flatulence it is also likely to prove of signal service. The merits of this preparation appear to consist in its being compounded of ingredients which are habitually used by physicians in cases of ordinary want of tone, and in its safe and pleasant nature as a family remedy."
Health, Aug. 1, 1890.

Guy's Tonic

A THANK-OFFERING.

"Gentlemen,—I am glad of an opportunity of proclaiming the value of Guy's Tonic for Indigestion, Torpid Liver, and Nervous Depression. I was nearly worn out with loss of appetite, pain, fulness, and general uneasiness after eating, great drowsiness as well as flushings of the face and flatulency after each meal. I was also in a nervous, irritable state, as well as having a hacking cough with great weariness, languor, and despondency. I dieted myself, gave up meat, took more exercise, but with no benefit. My wife—who had found your Tonic extremely efficacious in those distressing symptoms peculiar to her sex—persuaded me to give it a trial. Thank God I did so, for Guy's Tonic has worked a miracle. I am completely cured, gentlemen, and send this as a thank-offering for my wonderful recovery.—Yours faithfully,

QUITE A MIRACLE.

"J. W. PRICE."

A MATCHLESS MEDICINE.

Guy's Tonic

Should you have failing health, no matter from what cause, don't hesitate, but procure Guy's Tonic at once. The most obstinate, chronic, and complicated maladies are yielding daily to this matchless medicine. The Medical Editor, writing in *Woman* of Nov. 6, 1890, says: "If you suffer from indigestion, try Guy's Tonic; you cannot have anything better. I speak from experience, and you may depend I never suggest anything to my patients of which I do not know the value."

A CHRONIC INVALID.

"Dear Sirs,—I have the greatest pleasure in informing you that by taking Guy's Tonic I have got into a thoroughly healthy state. My digestion has greatly improved, and I sleep a vast deal better than I ever remember. This is all the more wonderful because I have been a sufferer for a very long time, so long that I was considered a chronic invalid. Yours truly,
"JOHN WOOD."

Guy's Tonic

TEARS AT A THEATRE.

"Dear Sirs,—I was in the most distressing nervous condition, ready to laugh or cry at any moment; hysterical to the last degree, and frightfully enervated in consequence. I dared not go to a theatre, as I disturbed everybody around me by the copious floods of tears which I was wholly incapable of restraining. I tried lots of things for this dreadful mental debility and nerve-prostration, but nothing did me any good. I then took a bottle of your Tonic, which was warmly recommended me by a friend. It acted like a charm. It quieted my nerves, calmed the brain, strengthened the stomach, and arrested the liver trouble which had lately made its appearance. My shattered constitution produced by this terrible prostration of mind and body has also been restored.—Yours truly thankful, "ELLEN BOYLE."

MR. E. BYWATER, writing on Dec. 11, 1890, says:—

"Gentlemen,—I send you stamps for another Bottle of Guy's Tonic, as I do not want to be without it. My wife has been suffering for eight or ten years with a weak stomach and indigestion. She was in the doctor's hands a month, but I am very pleased to tell you that after taking three or four doses of Guy's Tonic she said she had not felt so well for years, and the stomach trouble was quite relieved. Kindly send per return of post.—Yours, etc.,
"E. BYWATER."

The Proprietors will be pleased to show the originals of the above testimonials, with numerous others, to anyone calling at their Offices, 4, Ludgate-circus.

Guy's Tonic is for sale by all Chemists at 2s. 9d. per Bottle. If you cannot obtain it promptly, remit the amount (2s. 9d.) to Guy's Tonic Co., 4, Ludgate-circus, London, and it will be sent by return, post paid. Insist upon having Guy's Tonic. No substitute whatever should be accepted.

THE *Medical Annual* advises Practitioners to remember that when recommending Cocoa as a food and beverage for invalids, the name CADBURY on any packet of Cocoa is a guarantee of purity.—[ADVT.]

A CHRISTMAS PARTY: WARM AND WELCOME.

DRAWN BY E. J. WALKER.

The children of the rich, in gay new dresses,
Stray on the stairs, from dancing at their ball:
Their house shines bright, with Fortune's fond caresses.
Childhood's bright spirit is a gift to all.

A CHRISTMAS PARTY: OUT IN THE COLD.

DRAWN BY A. E. MULREADY.

The children of the poor, with hearts as bright—
Save those who hunger, or are pinched with cold—
Peep in, rejoicing at the festive light,
For childhood knows not envy, and is bold.

THE WORLD OF WOMEN

The Christmassy Costume

copied on this page from the *Lady's Pictorial* looks warm enough even for the very chilly weather we have been enduring as best we could. "Mars," the *chic* and dexterous French Artist, was so much struck by this smart dress at a London fashionable gathering that he sketched it. The bodice and the lower half of the sleeves are of black velvet, the upper sleeves being of fur. Part of the bodice and the basques are in chaudron cloth with jet designs.

By the time these lines are in print, how busy you will all be putting up the very last of the

Christmas Decorations;

sending off the very last of the Christmas cards; and, though last not least, giving the very last stir to the Christmas pudding! It is rather sad, I think, to hear the way some people nowadays sneer at Christmas and all that appertains to it. It is "going out," we are told; but it will be a very long time, I hope, before it disappears from England. It is

The Children's Day

above all others; and, although our boys and girls, or some of them, seem to be born grown up, there will, I hope, be always children enough left to enjoy Christmas in the good old-fashioned style. In that charming book, "London Street Arabs," lately brought out by Mrs. H. M. Stanley (Dorothy Tennant), she tells such a touching and pathetic

Story

of one of her models, which I must quote, it is so seasonable: "A dear little boy of six," she says, "told me he loved Christmas Day because on Christmas Eve he hung up his stocking, and the next morning he found a present inside. 'What did you find last Christmas?' I inquired. 'A halfpenny!' he said, smiling with pleasure at the recollection, 'but,' he added truthfully, 'I put it there myself overnight!'" For my own part,

I Love Christmas,

in spite of the fact that it brings many sad memories with it, as it must do to all except the very young.

Let me quote what a clever man once said about it in a sermon he preached on Christmas Day. The words are so good, so true, and so simple that they are far better than any I could write if I were to try for ever. "I like Christmas Day," he said. "I think it is a more Christian day than any other in the Church's calendar. All the observances connected with the season serve to remind us of the morality, the sociality, the geniality of

The Religion of Christ,

which at other seasons are forgotten or ignored. The Christmas cards which are sent to us and which we send to others; the presents which we give and receive; the decorations in our houses and in our churches, the family gatherings, the dinner-parties, the games, the pantomimes, the dances—the way in which we wish

'A Merry Christmas!'

to everyone, and really feel as if we meant it—all these things make one love the season of Christmas better than any other season in the year, and it is my duty and my privilege to remind you that the spirit of Christmas Day should be, for a Christian, the spirit of every day. Let us try to make it so." Exactly, let us try. Surely on Christmas day, if on no other, "family jars" should be closed—and if hermetically sealed so much the better. If there cannot be "Peace on earth" just yet, let there be

Peace in the Home.

Let all clamour and evil-speaking be put away from us, and let us try and be children once more. Even if there are empty spaces in our hearts, even if the desire of our eyes is withheld from us, let us not shut our ears to the music that is left. You know these lines, do you not?

And ye beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now:
For glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
Oh! rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!

And they can be heard singing in the very tiniest and poorest home, if we will but listen. They are singing loudly when the little ones shout with glee over their Christmas-boxes, and climb upon their father's knee to thank him for what he has given, and to give him in return some little gift which the precious "money-box" has been rifled to obtain. And don't be too anxious to check the noise the youngsters make on Christmas Day over their games and their story-telling

Be Children Yourselves

for a few hours; help to roast the chestnuts on the bar; revive your own youth in a merry round of snapdragon; set your inventive faculty to work, and tell stories, and join in the games of

Forfeits and Proverbs.

I saw rather a nice new game, the other day, called "Geographical Loto." I think, myself, it is perhaps a shade too instructive for a Christmas pastime, but it would not be bad for a change. But, if the frost holds and the nipping north-easter still blows, there is nothing like a good, bustling game of

Blind Man's Buff,

Puss in the corner, or, better still, a dance, to set the blood dancing, the young eyes glistening, and the young cheeks aglow. Get mother, or that dear, kind, pretty "Auntie," to

The Piano,

to play for you; set the little brothers and sisters and cousins waltzing and quadrilling. And does it not look pretty to see "Papa" dancing with his eldest girl? Then mother and he must have a turn, and, as he twirls her under the mistletoe, they remind one another of that Christmas Eve—how many years ago is it? And as they pause to count, the little ones stop too, and all gather round the fire to listen—all except one, a curly-headed mite of about four, who has discovered that dear, pretty "Auntie" is crying at the piano, and steals over to try and comfort her. The baby does not know it, but there is an empty space in auntie's heart, and her tears fall at the remembrance of that last Christmas Day when it was full. And I think we should all try to remember at this season that, no matter how poor we may be ourselves, there are hundreds, thousands, who are poorer still, and that if it is in our power to help anyone, no matter how little, we are bound to do it. Do not forget, while you are

Merry-Making

yourselves, that there is, perhaps, a young maid-servant alone in the kitchen downstairs, who is very far away from her home, if she has one, and very sad too and lonely at heart. Remember, it is not enough to give her enough to eat on the festive day. Food will never banish home-sickness, or make up for the want of a few words of sympathy and kindness. I must say I have the greatest possible pity for

Maids-of-all-work—

of *over*-work, I should call them; and if any of my readers can do anything on Christmas Day to give even one of them a little pleasure, what a good work it will be! Believe me, insignificant though the action may seem, it will help on the time

When peace shall over all the earth
Its blessed banner fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Most heartily I wish you all a Happy Christmas!

MARGUERITE.

SOMETHING LIKE A CHRISTMAS GET-UP.—SKETCHED BY "MARS."

Mr. Crowe's Remarkable Case.—He obtained one of Harness' Electropathic Belts, which completely cured him in a few days. Writing from The Hill, Wickham Market, he says: "I have been free from pain since the first week of wearing your belt." The original of his and thousands of other similar reports may be personally inspected, and the belts may be seen scientifically tested, at the Electropathic and Zander Institute, 52, Oxford-street, London, W., where the Medical Battery Company's officers may be consulted daily without charge, either personally or by letter. Pamphlet and book of testimonials free.—[Advt.]

"There is Unquestionably" no better remedy in the whole world for all cough and throat troubles than Keating's Lozenges—any medical man will assure you of this fact. Relief is speedy; they contain no strong-acting, but only simple drugs; the most delicate can take them. Sold everywhere in 13½d. Tins.—[Advt.]

MOONLIGHT ON THE LAGOONS.

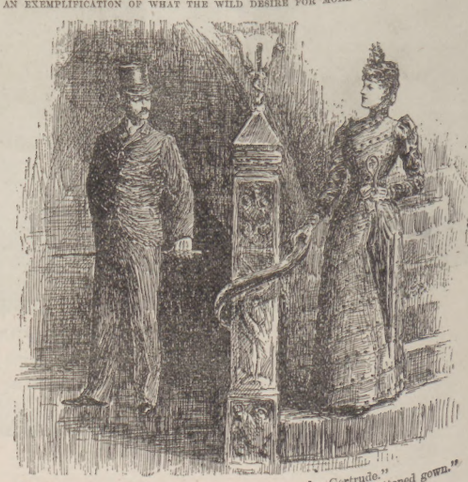
Gondolier (hesitatingly, to tourist): "Scusata, mia Signori, but hava you not ze moon, ze che bell' luna, in Americ"?"

Tourist: "Why, certainly we have. Why do you ask that?"

Gondolier (apologetically): "Because ze American always say ze first thing, 'Let us goa out and gaze upon ze moon.'"

THE PRESENT CRAZE.

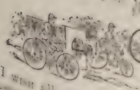
AN EXEMPLIFICATION OF WHAT THE WILD DESIRE FOR MORE BUTTONS MAY LEAD TO.



Mr. Easemore: "You were very long getting ready, Gertrude."

Mrs. Easemore: "Yes, dear. I had to get into my spirally buttoned gown."

AN AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP SKATING RACE NEAR SPALDING.



CYCLE & CAMERA

I wish all my readers the compliments of the season, though Christmas is not a season of special interest to cyclists as cyclists. There is riding only for the most enterprising, but they, of late, on the well-frozen roads and in the brisk cold weather, have reaped the reward of their enterprise. Cycling dinners and smokers and Cinderellas have, as a rule, been put off till after the holidays. Cycling drills have been postponed in like manner. Machines are forgotten, for this week at least, while riders devote themselves to enjoying the merry Christmas which I so sincerely wish them.

Good wishes for the New Year are more [illegible], especially as '91 promises to be of [illegible] importance in the history of cycling. To [illegible] is looking for the solution of the tyre [illegible]. There does not seem much doubt now [illegible] cushion will be the prevailing tyre for [illegible] coming season. The large makers, who have [illegible] to wait for the Stanley Show to bring [illegible] their new designs, but are already exhibiting [illegible] in their factories and shops, are fitting the greater number of their wheels with the cushion. It may not be theoretically as good as the pneumatic, but at least practically it is without the disadvantages of the latter—disadvantages which still exist, though it is more than probable that they will be got rid of before another year.

The present arrangement of the Stanley Show [illegible] to be giving satisfaction to all concerned.

[illegible] Valse.—The prettiest and latest published. [illegible] and acknowledged by her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. 2s., post free.—Thompson and Shackell, Limited, 112, Newfoundland-road, Bristol.—[Advt.]

The makers who do not exhibit have not been obliged to wait until the end of January for spring orders, and so have kept busy during their usually dull season. The small makers will have such a chance to take a prominent place in the exhibition as has never before been given them, and that they appreciate this chance is shown by the fact that about 126 applications from new exhibitors have been received by the secretary. The Stanley Club ought to be satisfied, as they have not been obliged to interrupt their series of shows. And the ordinary cyclist certainly must rejoice in the prospect of an exhibition which is always bound to contain something of interest, and which gives him the opportunity of meeting many of his fellow-riders from different parts of the country or the world, whom he never sees at other times. Entries for the show closed on Monday last.

Mr. F. Percy Low, of *Wheeling*, is again to the fore with his appeal for contributions to the Sandwichmen's Fund. As I explained last year, he every winter gets up a "feed" for the poor sandwichmen, who are so seldom remembered. To provide for them a "meat tea, reasonable tobacco and beer," he requires the sum of £50, and he would be very glad to receive contributions, no matter how small, from anyone who feels charitably disposed at this season, supposed to inspire one to charitable deeds. The object is a worthy one, and whoever has seen the sandwichmen at their tea on previous occasions knows how thoroughly they enjoy it.

The London Local Centre for the N.C.U. has been now formed. At the meeting held for the purpose there was no opposition, except from Mr. C. A. Smith, who moved an amendment "that Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire be omitted." This is recognised to be reasonable enough, but apparently the time has not yet come to allow those counties to look out for themselves. As soon as they see their way to doing so, the meeting decided that they were to be not only allowed but encouraged to form a centre of their own.

This same Mr. Smith, better known as Bath-road Smith, has amended his propositions on the subject of road-racing, and made them somewhat more intelligible. Now he proposes "that no race shall be held on the road for any distance under twenty-five miles", and "that no road race shall be started inside the limits of the London Metropolitan Police, and, in the case of country towns, inside their town police-boundaries." If we are to have road-racing, I would rather have it ruled by the N.C.U., according to Mr. Smith's suggestions, than by Mr. Blair's proposed Road Riding and Record Association, without any definite limit as to place and distance. But I would far rather not have any road-racing at all.

It is curious to see how of late the bicycle has been gradually returning to the earliest types—that is, to the bone-shaker. And now *Wheeling*, quoting from another paper, says that an American maker is trying to reintroduce wooden wheels for bicycles. I can hardly believe, however, that his experiment will meet with much success.

Colonel Savile gave another of his very interesting lectures on military cycling in Edinburgh a few days ago. N.C.U.

"The Dramatic Peerage" does not aim to vie with "Burke's Peerage"—the Bible of the "Upper Ten." It does not consist of a list of famous actresses who have become Peeresses. It is simply a handy alphabetical directory of living actors and actresses, copious enough to satisfy even the enthusiastic stage-worshippers of the Playgoers' Club. It is published, for one shilling, at 280, Strand.

Lost Vitality Restored.—The Mexican Life Pills, 2s. 9d. and 4s. 6d. per box. Guaranteed to cure all nervous diseases.—Haynes and Co., Wednesbury.—[Advt.]

Rupture and Truss Torture are Terrible.—Secure the Sherman method, and avoid both. Call on or address J. A. Sherman, Hernial Specialist, 64, Chancery-lane, London. The photographs of extraordinary cases before and after cure to be seen at his offices are marvellous. His book, post free, 7d.—[Advt.]

VERDI'S NEW OPERA.

For two or three years there were rumours that Signor Verdi, the "Grand Old Man" of Italy, was engaged on another Shaksperean opera, and, of course, people imagined it must of necessity be a tragic work, just as admirers of Wagner took it for granted, when told of his being at work on another opera after the production of "Tristan und Isolde" in 1865, that another tragic opera was contemplated. But Wagner astonished them in 1868 with the "Meistersinger," a purely comic opera, although not at all the sort of "comic" work that French composers would comprehend. It was, in fact, humorous rather than comic, depending upon study of character. Verdi's new opera will, it is understood, be an opera of a similar kind, and the subject is founded upon "The Merry Wives of Windsor." According to present intentions, it is to be called "Falstaff," and the most prominent figure will be the Fat Knight. Lovers of operatic music will remember that there are several settings already of Shakspere's play. For example, there is the "Falstaff" of Balfe, an opera full of lively melody, in which the composer himself appeared at Her Majesty's Theatre. There is another opera by Nicolai, "The Merry Wives of Windsor," which has been heard several times in this country.

EVERY WOMAN who has her own housework to do knows that washing day is the chief cause of the careworn look, broken health, and premature old age noticeable in so many of her sex. Many a woman has to bend over a steaming wash-tub full of soiled clothes—to boil all the forenoon, and rub all the afternoon—and, while still warm and perspiring from the hot, filthy steam, run out into the cold—bare-headed and bare-armed—to hang up the clothes on a freezing line. This is done not once, but week after week, and the wonder is how any woman lives through it—many don't! The sudden change from the hot, perspiring labour and wet, steaming room inside to the cold air outside produces the natural result: a cold, followed quickly by pneumonia or diphtheria, or some kindred disease, ending in the death of the poor victim. Friends call it a dispensation of Providence. What the woman actually died of was *poor soap*, hard labour, and exposure. Health is a Preservation of Beauty, is a necessity to happiness and the lives of your children. *Don't Grow Old Before Your Time!* Washing, under the most favourable circumstances, is hard enough. No trouble should be spared in getting a soap which is pure, effective, and long-lasting. All these qualities will be found in the "Sunlight Soap," and by its use the wash—in comparison with the old way—is almost child's play. A girl twelve years old can do a larger wash in less time with "Sunlight Soap" than a strong woman can with an ordinary soap.

YOUR CLOTHES WILL LAST LONGER.

With the old adulterated soaps clothes wear out quicker than lightning. The "Sunlight Soap" takes the dirt out without injuring the finest material.

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SUNLIGHT SOAP MONTHLY COMPETITION.

PRIZES VALUE OVER £600.

FOR YOUNG FOLKS ONLY. Competitors not to be over 17 years of age last birthday.

The first of these Monthly Competitions commenced on Aug. 31, followed by others on Sept. 30, Oct. 31, Nov. 30, and will be continued until further notice. There is no element of chance in these Competitions, the winning of a Prize depending entirely on the perseverance and trouble taken to collect the Wrappers. The Competitions are held every Month, so failure in one does not discourage, but stimulates to a fresh effort.

PRIZES VALUE OVER £600.—60 Silver Keyless Lever Watches, Value £4 4s. each; 100 Silver Keyless Watches, Value 30s. each; 8 Tricycles and 8 Safety Bicycles.

Names of Winners of each month's Competition are advertised in *Tit Bits* and *Answers* the fourth week of the month following.

Send full Name and Address on Postcard for Rules to LEVER BROS., Limited, Port Sunlight, near Birkenhead.

Purchasers, see that you get a Sunlight Soap Wrapper with each Tablet.

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GLYCERINE & CUCUMBER

KEEPS THE SKIN SOFT, SMOOTH, AND WHITE DURING THE COLDEST WEATHER.

PRESERVES THE SKIN FROM THE EFFECTS OF FROST, COLD WINDS, AND HARD WATER.

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PRESERVING AND BEAUTIFYING THE SKIN EVER PRODUCED.
It keeps the SKIN SOFT, SMOOTH, and WHITE during the COLDEST WEATHER, entirely Removes and Prevents all
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and preserves the SKIN from the effects of
FROST, COLD WINDS, & HARD WATER
more effectually than any other preparation. If applied after Dancing or visiting Heated Apartments it will be found delightfully Cooling and Refreshing. Beware of Injurious Imitations. "BEETHAM'S" is the only genuine. All others are Imitations. Bottles, 1s., 2s. 6d., of all Chemists. Free for 3d. extra by the Sole Makers,
M. BEETHAM & SON, Chemists, Cheltenham.

A SIOUX CAMP.

SITTING BULL.

SITTING BULL'S LAST FIGHT.

A FEW weeks ago we printed in the *P.I.P.* a few photographs of the North American Indian tribes concerned in the recent rising in the "Far West." We now give Portraits of the late Chief Sitting Bull, and some Sketches of Indian life.

General Miles has received advices that the Chief Sitting Bull and his son have been killed, under the following circumstances: The Indian police started to arrest Sitting Bull, as they had heard that he intended going to Badlands. A troop of cavalry followed the police, and upon their arrival at Sitting Bull's camp, forty miles from Standing Rock, it was evident that arrangements had already been made for departure. The police thereupon arrested Sitting Bull, and started back with him in custody. His followers, however, rallied, and attempted a rescue. A mêlée ensued, in the course of which Sitting Bull, his son, and several Indians, as well as five of the Indian police, were killed.

* * * * *

The details of the affray show that the great chief's followers numbered about a hundred, and it was all that the Indian police could do to keep off their assailants pending the arrival of assistance. Fortunately a troop of United States cavalry was about three miles behind the police, and when Sitting Bull's braves attempted a rescue a courier was at once dispatched to the rear to call up the mounted men. The latter hurried forward, and arrived just in the nick of time to prevent the wholesale massacre of the policemen, who had completely used up their ammunition, and were at the mercy of their foes.

* * * *

It is feared that Sitting Bull's followers, having tasted blood, will require severe energetic treatment for some time. General Miles has left St. Paul for Deadwood, famous in the annals of old Indian warfare, travelling viâ Standing Rock. Two Strikes has reached General Brookes's camp at Pineridge, and has surrended with a portion of his band. Two hundred bucks, however, are still on the war-path.

* * * * *

President Harrison, commenting upon the above intelligence, said that he had regarded Sitting Bull as the great disturbing element of the tribe. Now that this chief was dead, the President hoped that a settlement of the difficulties would be arrived at without further bloodshed. Sitting Bull was the renowned chief of the Sioux, and he shared with the Indian Messiah the reputation of being the chief cause of the present trouble on the Indian frontier. Orders were given to take him alive, but, as this proved impossible, he was brought in dead. Nearly thirty years ago the chief tried to clear Dakota of the white men, and slew hundreds of settlers who were found poaching on his preserves. The white men have greatly multiplied in the land since then, while Sitting Bull's power has been on the wane. He ends as he began—in a conflict which was the outcome of his eternal protest against their intrusion. The railway and all the other forces of civilisation have been too much for him. He dies true to himself, consistent with his simple plan of tameless savagery as a career in life. There is just so much of heroism in his death. If it had been in his choice, he might have found a grander occasion for his fall, when, in 1876, he encountered an American General—Custer—at the head of a body of picked troops, and left hardly one of them to tell the tale.

Christmas Gifts for the Distressed in Ireland.—Her Majesty's ship Seahorse, twin-screw special service vessel, left Portsmouth on Dec. 19 with a large quantity of potatoes for the distressed districts in Ireland. The Magnet goes upon a similar errand; and the Grappler is under orders to sail on the 27th inst.

MR. PHILPOT'S NEW DRAMATIC CANTATA.

AT Gresham Hall, Brixton, on Dec. 17, a large and appreciative audience assembled to witness the performance of a new dramatic cantata entitled "Zelica," the latest work from the pen of Mr. S. R. Philpot, the words being adapted from Moore's "Lalla Rookh." Mr. Philpot is to be congratulated upon this his latest musical achievement, the music being very tuneful.

Mr. Philpot, it may be remembered, was the composer of a charming little opera, "Dante and Beatrice," produced at the same hall last year.

In "Zelica" Mr. Philpot has put some fine work, and has been careful to adapt the tone of his music to the nature of the incidents treated.

Thus the combinations of the prophetic and the military elements of the piece were fully taken advantage of by this young Academy student, with successful results. Of course the features of the evening were the appearance of two singers so high in their profession on the one platform at the same time—Miss Anna Williams, who took the part of Zelica, and Mr. Ben Davies, who, as Azim, sang several good selections in his masterly style.

The part of Leila and the "Veiled Prophet" were taken respectively by Miss Harwood and Mr. Dan Price, a bass singer of no small order. Mr. Philpot conducted the chorus and band of 150 persons in an effective way. At the close Mr. Philpot was called before the house with great heartiness. We hope Mr. Philpot will see his way into giving another representation of this opera with the same artists, so that people who were unable to attend the late concert may then be able to go and hear good music well sung.

The serenade in act two, sung by Mr. Ben Davies, is published by Messrs. Weeks and Co. It should meet with that success which it so well deserves.

Royal Visit to "Antony and Cleopatra."—The Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught visited the Princess's Theatre on Dec. 19.

THE LATE SITTING BULL IN WAR ARRAY.

PATERNAL CONSIDERATION.

Officer: "Careful, there! What are you doing?" Escaping Party: "Don't stop us! My daughter's beau don't suit us, so rather than hurt her feelin's mother an' me 's goin' t' elope."

PRICKING THE BUBBLE.

"How did that stupid fellow, Crass, gain a reputation as a wit?"

"He was once interviewed by an unusually bright reporter."

NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN BURIAL.

ONE OF SITTING BULL'S WIDOWS.

NO ADMITTANCE!

CYCLING ROUND THE WORLD.

BY THE *P.I.P.* CYCLISTS.

ILLUSTRATED BY KODAK VIEWS.

SPECIALLY contributed to the *Penny Illustrated Paper* by the American Touring Cyclists, MM. William L. Sachtleben and Thomas G. Allen jun., who are travelling on the Minnehaha roadsters of the Iroquois Cycle Company, and whose first letter appeared on Oct. 18.

LETTER NINE:
IN AND OUT OF VENICE.

(*To the Editor of "The Penny Illustrated Paper."*)

FLORENCE, Nov. 20, 1890.

The Sun was Shining

warm and bright on the morning of Nov. 15 as we walked along with our wheels, past the church of St. Marco and the Palace of the Doges, down to the wharf of the little steamer that was to carry us across the harbour. The large crowd, which had been attracted by the strange sight of a bicycle in Venice, followed us all the way to the landing, and stood watching until the little vessel steamed down the "Leguna." From the deck we stood gazing for the last time at the old, famed

Landmarks of Venice.

The city looked more beautiful than ever on this warm sunny morning, and we were more loth than ever to leave it and its many poetical associations. As we recalled our experience there during the past few days we could not help smiling at the many ludicrous situations in which we had been placed with our wheels. Our youthful fancy had often pictured for us a visit to this strange "City of Canals," but we never before imagined ourselves

Riding into Venice on a Bicycle.

At ten o'clock the steamer touched the wharf at Fusina, the small landing-place for the waggon road to Padua. A minute or two later we were on our wheels speeding away over the low, flat country in the vicinity of the Adriatic,

On our Way Back to Padua.

This was the first time that we had to return on our track. Owing to the swampy nature of this part of the country, there was no road to Bologna and Florence other than viâ Padua. Not far from Fusina, the waggon road meets the steam tramway that runs from the steamer landing to Padua, a distance of eighteen miles, and runs side by side with it to within four miles of the latter place. When we neared this point,

The Steam Tram

was just coming along, loaded with the passengers from our steamer. The engineer shouted to us as we approached, and challenged us to a race. As a bicycle in this part of the country is a very rare sight, its capabilities are either not known or vastly overrated. Such, no doubt, was the case with the engineer and the passengers, who by this time had joined in the challenge. We were not to be outdone, however, without an effort; and, as the road was level and good, we determined to give them a trial. Mile after mile was made side by side with the puffing engine, until at last the tram began to pull away from us, and the passengers, who had been watching the sport with the greatest glee and excitement, waved us a taunting farewell. At the first stopping-place, however, we

Shot Past Them,

and were far ahead before the tram was started. But it was soon upon us again, and then there was another race to the next station. The waggons on the road were passed at the rate of sixteen miles an hour: everyone along the way caught up the spirit of the occasion and cheered us on. It was just an hour after leaving Fusina that we reached the divergence in the roads, and parted company with our competitor. The waving handkerchiefs disappeared around the bend, and we saw them no more.

We left Padua

after dinner by the road which leads south between the Apennines and the sea. The weather was exceedingly mild, and we were riding along very comfortably in our shirt-sleeves. When about ten miles on our way, we saw walking towards us several ladies with white parasols and light summer dresses. It was such an unusual sight for us on a day in November that we jumped off our wheels to snap the Kodak on them. They immediately perceived our object, and began to question us about the camera. After becoming very much interested in this and our machines, one of the ladies, who spoke French, invited us into their neighbouring villa to take a glass of wine and talk with the gentlemen at the house. As we had never before had the opportunity of seeing the interior of

An Italian Villa,

we accepted the invitation, and walked with them through the large gateway into the spacious grounds of the estate. It was evidently the property of some wealthy family, for the house and surroundings were most sumptuous and elegant. As we walked through the garden of beautiful shrubbery and flowers, it brought to our minds some idea of what might have been the sumptuous splendour of Italy in the days of ancient Rome.

We next found ourselves in the midst of the family group, including even the kitchen-maids and coachmen. Among them also were two young priests, who seemed to be connected in some way with the family. These two gentlemen were more interested than anyone else in our outfit and the account of our journey. For a joke we suggested that they should mount the machines for a photograph; but imagine our surprise when they immediately acted upon the suggestion. The joke was immediately reversed upon ourselves. After a glass of good Italian wine, at the request of our hosts we made a few turns around the park to give them

A Little Exhibition.

A bicycle was evidently a rare object with them, and as the nickel-plating on our machines glistened in the afternoon sunlight, through the green tropical shrubbery of the garden, it fairly captivated our admiring spectators. After half an hour we took leave of our kind entertainers, and again resumed our journey.

When we had ridden for about an hour on what we thought was the right road, we entered a town which we could not find on our maps. On inquiry we found that we had turned off in a wrong direction, and run all the way to Este, the seat of the famous Italian House of Este. Although our mistake had obtained for us a view of this old but once flourishing town, it had taken us ten miles out of our way. It was all we could do to make our way back to the main road at the little

Village of Stanghella

by nightfall. We put up here for the night at the small Hôtel Sperenza, where we obtained very good accommodation and the kindest attention at a very moderate price. A crowd of loiterers gathered around us as we entered the town, and followed us all the way to the hotel. Before long the room on the ground floor was jammed with the constantly increasing crowd. When driven out, they lay siege to the windows and key-holes.

WM. L. SACHTLEBEN.
THOS. G. ALLEN, JUN.

P.I.P. CYCLISTS IN ITALY: CORNER OF THE DOGE'S PALACE, VENICE.

P.I.P. CYCLISTS IN ITALY: ANOTHER VIEW OF THE DOGE'S PALACE, VENICE.

P.I.P. CYCLISTS IN ITALY: BRIDGE OF SIGHS (IN THE DISTANCE), VENICE.

P.I.P. CYCLISTS IN ITALY: LEAVING THE PIAZZETTA, VENICE.

P.I.P. CYCLISTS IN ITALY: S. MARIA DELLA SALUTE, FROM GONDOLA, VENICE.

P.I.P. CYCLISTS IN ITALY: PALAZZO CAVALLI, FROM GONDOLA, VENICE.

THROAT AFFECTIONS AND HOARSENESS.—All suffering from irritation of the throat and hoarseness will be agreeably surprised at the almost immediate relief afforded by the use of BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES. These famous "lozenges" are sold everywhere at 1s. 1½d. per box. People troubled with a "hacking cough," a "slight cold," or bronchial affections cannot try them too soon, as similar troubles, if allowed to progress, result in serious pulmonary and asthmatic affections. See that the words "Brown's Bronchial Troches" are on the Government stamp around each box.—[ADVT.

"CLEANING SILVER."—All difficulty in keeping silver, electro-plate, &c., untarnished and with a brilliant polish may be obviated by using GODDARD'S NON-MERCURIAL PLATE-POWDER. Sold everywhere, in Boxes, 1s., 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. Six gold medals awarded.—[ADVT.]

The Church Army.—The Lord Bishop of Wakefield, who is surrounded by many pressing needs in his own diocese, has sent a cheque for £10 towards the Church Army scheme for "Darkest England," and says he wishes he could have sent more. He then adds, "I pray God to bless your work!" Labour Home Shelters are expected to be opened in many large provincial towns in the kingdom.

TO DARKEN GREY HAIR.—Lockyer's Sulphur Hair Restorer is the quickest, best, safest, and cheapest. Large Bottles, 1s. 6d. Everywhere.—ADVT.

DID NOT WANT IT SPOILED.

"Mrs. Larkin," remarked the minister, "we wish you would let your daughter join the choir."

"Oh, I couldn't think of it!" replied Mrs. Larkin; "she has a sweet disposition, and I don't want her to become quarrelsome."

She: "Now we are married, Tom, you might give up smoking for my sake."

He: "I don't see why. I'm sure you have given up none of your amusements for my sake. Have you, now?"

She: "Yes, I have. I have quit getting engaged, haven't I?"

STANLEY'S DANGER.

"It would be a terrible blow to Stanley."

"What?"

"If Barttelot and Jephson should prove there was no ... in Africa."

BEFORE AND AFTER.

BACHELOR.

I throw my old cigar away,
Three quarters smoked;
I watch it turn from red to gray,
There is no tongue to chide my act,
Nor any hand to stay.

BENEDICK.

She throws my old cigar away,
One quarter smoked,
She asks not if she can or may,
I have no power to change the fact,
Nor any hand to stay.

JOHN JAMES MEEHAN.

Old Friend: "Your plan is a most excellent one; but do you think your wife will agree to it?"

Married Man: "Oh yes. I'll tell her someone else suggested it, and I'll call it an idiotic idea."

THEY ALL DO IT.

Distracted Woman (at the police station): "Oh, Sir, I have lost my poor old father! This morning he wandered away, and I fear for his safety, as he is totally deaf."

Police Sergeant: "In that case, Madam, we will soon find him. He is walking on the railway track."

LOVE IS BLIND.

What fools, indeed, these mortals be!
And foremost in this land
Of many million mortal fools,
The foolish lovers stand.

Each thinks that with his own fair maid
None other can compare,
Poor things! they do not see that mine
Is twenty times as fair!

J. P. DENISON.

AFTER THE BALL.

Lady de Primrose: "What do you think of the new duchess?"

Mrs. Normanby: "Oh, she's a perfect phonograph!"

Lady de Primrose: "I don't understand. What *do* you mean?"

Mrs. Normanby: "Well, you see, she speaks without thinking!"

Sentimental Maiden: "There goes Jack's wife. She is never happy when Jack is out of her sight. Is it because she loves him so much?"

Experienced Widow: "No; it's because she knows him so well."

Wifey: "Have you still unkind thoughts of that old rival of yours?"

Hubby: "Yes; I hate him because you jilted him."

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... —IN BANKRUPTCY.

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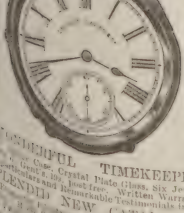

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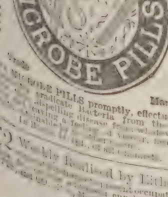
MICROBES.  MICROBES.

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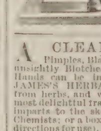

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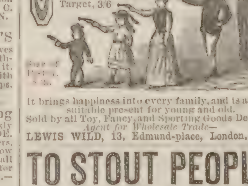

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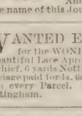

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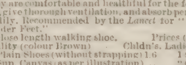

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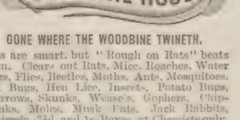

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This heart, my own dear mother, bends,
With love's true instinct, back to thee.—*Moore.*

Who that has languished, even in advanced life, in sickness and despondency—who that has pined on a weary bed in the neglect and loneliness of a foreign land—but has thought on the mother 'that looked on his childhood,' that smoothed his pillow and administered to his helplessness? Oh! there is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame and exult in his prosperity:—and, if misfortune overtake him, he will be the dearer to her from misfortune; and if disgrace settle upon his name, she will still love and cherish him in spite of his disgrace; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

Washington Irving.

And such is human life, so gliding on,

It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone!

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THE MURDERER'S DOG.

BY GEORGE R. SIMS.

IN the winter of the year 1887 I spent a few weeks in Madrid.

I had "descended," as the French say, at the Fonda de la Paz, the hotel principally patronised by English and American tourists.

The rooms allotted to me, in return for a payment of forty pesetas a day, were on a second floor, and commanded an uninterrupted view of the famous Puerta del Sol, the principal public thoroughfare of the capital. From my balcony a perpetual panorama of Spanish life unfolded itself before me, and the scene was always *égayante* and interesting.

There was only one drawback to the many advantages the situation of my apartments conferred upon me, and that was the perpetual noise.

Life on the Puerta del Sol commences about 5 a.m. and leaves off about 3 a.m.

Up till 2 a.m. the newspaper boys continue to shout their special editions, and the vendors of oranges, lemonade, and sweetmeats to yell their wares, and the traffic never ceases at all.

At first I found it difficult to sleep at all through the continuous uproar, but gradually I grew accustomed to it, and then even a dozen newsboys yelling, "A horrible murder!" under my window all night long failed to keep me awake.

One gets at last so accustomed to noise that it is its cessation which interferes with your repose.

I have had this experience often—the most notable instance was when for a whole fortnight I lived in an hotel in Covent-garden. My bed-room window then looked right upon the space immediately in front of the market, and all night long the heavy carts rolled up over the great stones, and the horses' hoofs clattered, and the drivers and the market-porters shouted, creating between them a perfect Pandemonium.

Singularly enough, after a night or two, the incessant noise ceased to interfere with my rest. It was only on Saturday nights, when the place was as silent as the grave, that I lay and tossed from side to side. I *missed* the noise, and that kept me awake.

I have only mentioned this circumstance because it is exactly on all fours with my experience when I lived on the Puerta del Sol in Madrid.

One day, after returning from a bull-fight at which "all Madrid," including the Queen-Regent, had assisted, I found quite a large crowd gathered round the entrance to my hotel, and a number of people in the crowd were talking at the top of their voices, and gesticulating violently. The hotel interpreter was standing calmly surveying the scene in the most approved and dignified Spanish manner, and, pushing my way through the people until I reached him, I begged him to explain to me what was the matter.

"It is nothing," he said quietly; "only that man yonder in the long cloak is a murderer, and he is being stared at by the crowd."

"A murderer!" I exclaimed. "Then how is it he is not in custody?"

"He has been. He has come out of prison to-day."

"He has been released?"

"No; he has had leave of absence to attend the bull-fight. Instead of returning to prison, as he should have done, he has taken a stroll on to the Puerta. The people have recognised him, and so now he is waiting here until the police come to take him to prison again. Some of the crowd might annoy him if he walked away."

I went upstairs to my room, and from my balcony I saw the dénouement of this little incident of Spanish everyday life. In about five minutes the police arrived; and, under a strong escort, the murderer was taken away, and politely conducted back to prison.

As he stood in the centre of the officers, I had a good opportunity of observing his features. I took a mental note of them, and registered them on my memory.

"It is nothing," he said quietly; "only that man yonder in the long cloak is a murderer, and he is being stared at by the crowd."

"THE MURDERER'S DOG."

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THE OLD FOLKS VISIT THE YOUNG FOLKS: "A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU!"

Suddenly, my attention was attracted by a man who was dragging a large black poodle dog after him by a string, and swearing at it and kicking it.

"THE MURDERER'S DOG."

That evening the interpreter accompanied me to a café-chantant in a low quarter of the town, where it was dangerous for a foreigner to go alone.

In the intervals of the entertainment (one which would have roused Mr. County Councillor MacDougall to frenzy) my interpreter told me the story of the murderer of whose rescue from the mob I had been an eyewitness that afternoon.

Don Roderigo C—— was awaiting his trial for the murder of his wife under peculiarly atrocious circumstances. The poor woman had aroused his jealousy by some thoughtless act, and after a violent quarrel he had confessed that his suspicions were groundless, and he was quite satisfied with her explanation.

But on the morning after the quarrel, while she was sleeping calmly by his side, he had deliberately stabbed her to death with his navaja, a murderous long-bladed knife, which is to the Spaniard what the stiletto is to the Italian.

For this murder he was arrested, and was awaiting his trial, when he obtained a day's holiday from an official of the prison to go and see the bull-fight.

The temporary release of a prisoner under such circumstances seems incredible to Englishmen; but the custom of letting prisoners out of jail is a very common one in Spain, where the jail discipline is extremely lax, and most of the officials are corrupt.

A case occurred, only a year or two since, in which an old lady was found murdered and robbed in Madrid, and for a long time the case was shrouded in mystery. The son, a notorious spendthrift and keeper of bad company, would have been suspected, but he was already in prison on a charge of swindling.

But one fine day this son had a quarrel with his jailer, whom he nearly strangled, and whom, in his rage, he accused of being a scoundrel. Mutual recriminations followed, and at last it came out that on the day the old lady was murdered the jailer had allowed his prisoner to leave the prison, on condition that he returned the next morning. The price of this favour was to be a thousand pesetas.

On the following morning the prisoner duly returned, but in the meantime he had gone secretly to his mother's apartment and murdered and robbed her—the thousand pesetas he handed his jailer were part of the plunder.

When he saw the dog he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and, muttering something in Spanish, walked hurriedly away from the door.

"THE MURDERER'S DOG."

But to return to my murderer. I have in my possession a collection of photographs connected with famous criminal cases, and a whole album full of the portraits of ladies and gentlemen who have qualified themselves for admission to the Chamber of Horrors. I mentioned this fact to my guide, and told him I should very much like to add a Spanish murderer to my collection. I was assured that my desire could easily be gratified, as Don Roderigo's photo was being exposed for sale in one of the principal shops in Madrid. On the following day the photograph was in my possession.

A few nights afterwards, returning very late to my hotel, I met an English friend, a well-known impresario who had come to Madrid to hear an operatic star who was then singing at the Opera House.

We adjourned to my rooms, and sat talking and smoking until far into the night. When my friend left me I flung my windows open to let out the smoke, and stepped out into the balcony.

There was plenty of life in the Puerta still, and I stood and finished my cigar and watched the cloaked Spaniards, looking like conspirators in a comic opera as they flitted past me in the moonlight.

Suddenly, my attention was attracted by a man who was dragging a large black poodle dog after him by a string, and swearing at it and kicking it.

I had noticed the same man walking up and down in front of our hotel with a dog before, and I understood that he was a dog-dealer.

I had never seen the dog before, but I saw at once that it was a valuable one. Pitying the poor beast for falling into such hands, I closed my window and went to bed.

The next day, when I went out, the dog-dealer was outside the hotel, and he was still accompanied by the poodle. The man came up to me, and, addressing me in Spanish, asked me to buy the dog.

One of those odd impulses for which one cannot always account seized me, and I thought I would buy the dog, if only to save such a handsome fellow from cruel treatment. I called the hotel interpreter to my aid, and the bargain was eventually struck. I paid a good deal more than the dog was worth: but I have no doubt the interpreter added a good percentage to the price for himself. He informed me that the dog was formerly the

It was about a fortnight later that one evening at the opera, while glancing round the house through my opera-glasses, I uttered an exclamation of surprise. Seated in a box by the side of a beautiful girl was the man who was so like Don's master.

"THE MURDERER'S DOG."

property of the murderer I had seen on the previous evening. After his arrest it had been bought by the dealer who had now sold it to me.

"You are fond of curiosities, Señor," said the interpreter. "You have one now, for you have a murderer's dog!"

"A murderer's dog!" I said to myself. "It don't sound pretty, but I suppose the animal hasn't acquired any of his master's bad habits."

As soon as I had paid the money, I took the dog up to my room and coaxed him and petted him, and we soon became good friends. But as I did not want to drag a poodle through Spain with me, I made inquiries as to the best way of sending him to England with a certainty of his being well looked after on the journey.

Fortunately, I discovered an English coachman who was taking some horses to England, and to him I entrusted my new purchase, whom, in honour of his nationality, I had christened "Don."

* * * * * * *

In the spring of the year 1889 I was walking through Leicester-square with Don, when my attention was attracted by his running and barking around a man whose face seemed familiar to me.

"Where have I seen that face before?" I said to myself: and then it suddenly occurred to me that the man in Leicester-square was very like the Madrid murderer whose dog I had bought.

Before I could get near enough to take a good look at him, he was lost in the crowd.

When I went home that afternoon, I took out the portrait of Don Roderigo, and looked at it carefully.

It was a most extraordinary resemblance!

"Don," I said to the poodle, who was now my constant companion—"Don, my boy, I believe that was your old master."

Don wagged his tail.

But, when I came to think it out, I felt sure that I must have been deceived by an accidental likeness. The man who murdered his wife must either have received "La Garotte" long ago or be working out his sentence in a Spanish prison.

It was about a fortnight later that one evening at the opera, while glancing round the house through my opera-glasses, I uttered an exclamation of surprise.

Seated in a box by the side of a beautiful girl was the man who was so like Don's master.

Seated in the next stall to me was a friend of mine who knows "everybody" in London.

I asked him if he knew the occupants of the box.

"Oh yes," he said: "the old gentleman standing at the back of the box is a Mr. Tomkins, a retired tradesman, very wealthy man, rose from nothing, made his money out of

GOOD CHRISTMAS FUN FOR THE CHILDREN: "SNAPDRAGON."

a sauce, I believe. The young lady is his only daughter—pretty girl, isn't she? The foreigner is a Spaniard—Don Pedro del Campo his name is."

"Know anything about him?"

"Not much. He gives himself out as a Spaniard of fortune, and is supposed to come from South America. He's engaged to Miss Tomkins—met her, I believe, at Nice this winter. Father don't like him, but the girl is madly in love with him."

"Seems to be a little mystery about him, eh? Is he in a good set over here?"

"No. But there's no doubt he's wealthy. Old Tomkins is a business-like man. I believe he required a banker's reference before he consented to the marriage."

I left the Opera that night determined to find out something about Don Pedro del Campo.

I had paid a good deal more attention to him all the evening than I had to the opera, and I had become convinced that he was none other than the man I had seen in custody in Madrid for the murder of his wife.

My first inquiries were so far satisfactory. Don Pedro was a man of wealth. There was no doubt that his wealth came from South America. He lived in good style in London, and his credit was excellent.

I thought I would find out if Don Roderigo's fate was known in Madrid, so I wrote to a friend there, and from him I received the following information.

Don Roderigo was found guilty, with extenuating circumstances, and condemned to several years' imprisonment.

Some six months later he saved the governor of the prison from an attack made upon him by a convict, and assisted the officers to quell a revolt. For this he was pardoned on condition he left the country. It is rumoured that directly after his release he inherited a fortune from a brother who died in South America.

Don Pedro del Campo was Don Roderigo the murderer! I was sure of it.

But how was I to prove it?

I found out the places Don Pedro was in the habit of frequenting, his hours of going out, &c., and one day I stationed myself outside his house near Hyde Park about eleven o'clock.

I had Don with me.

About ten minutes past eleven Don Pedro came out. I followed him a little way, then passed him, having the dog on a lead.

I thought the dog seemed excited as he passed the Spaniard. He sniffed and cocked his ears up.

Presently I loosed the dog, and he ran back and began to bark and jump up at Don Pedro.

I called the dog to me, and, raising my hat, apologised for my dog's attentions.

In fairly good English Don Pedro assured me that no harm was done.

"This dog is a countryman of yours," I said.

"Indeed!"

Don Pedro looked at the dog more attentively.

"Yes; I bought him in Madrid two years ago. He was the dog of Don Roderigo, who murdered his wife."

Don Pedro looked at me nervously; then he looked hard at the dog, who still whined and barked and attempted to caress his late master.

The Spaniard's face went ashy white for a moment, but he regained his composure.

"Call your dog off!" he said angrily. "I am afraid of dogs."

Then he turned round and walked rapidly away.

That afternoon I took a bold and decided step.

I called on Mr. Tomkins, and told him my story. The old gentleman was horrified, and declared he would at once demand an explanation of his future son-in-law.

"A murderer!" he exclaimed. "Great Heavens, what a fate for my child!"

As I was leaving the house with Don, who had accompanied me, we met Don Pedro on the steps. He was about to call.

When he saw the dog he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and muttering something in Spanish walked hurriedly away from the door.

A week afterwards I received a letter of thanks from Mr. Tomkins. Don Pedro had written to say that business had necessitated his immediate return to South America, and under these circumstances he resigned all claim to the hand of Miss Tomkins.

The young lady was inconsolable for a time; but when she learned that her hero was a wife-murderer she gradually recovered her spirits and felt that she had a lucky escape.

I still have Don, and I never look at him without thinking how astounded his master must have been when he came sniffing about his legs near the Park. When you commit a murder in Madrid you don't expect the dog you left behind you there to come suddenly barking and frisking around you in London.

"BABY'S OWN!"

(See our Coloured Supplement.)

Here, where Nature spreads her treasures,
Where the world seems all serene,
Revelling in rural pleasures
Two young ladies may be seen.
One's a sort of little mother,
With a dog to wisdom grown;
Just a Dotlet is the other,
With a pup—*that*'s Baby's Own!

Gladness gilds their sweet girl-faces,
As they in the meadows romp;
They are full of infant graces—
Better far than grown-up pomp!
There, amid the waving grasses,
Rivalry is clearly shown:
"Mother" thinks *her* dog surpasses—
"Dotlet" plumps for Baby's Own!

What the doggies think about it
Might, perhaps, afford surprise;
They feel rivalry (don't doubt it!),
As they watch these damsels' eyes.
That canine pride is none too supple,
Many a witness can depone:
But the prouder of the couple,
Probably, is Baby's Own!

Gambol, wee ones! Who 'll retard you
In this bright and healthful spot?
One will ever love and guard you—
He who said, "Forbid them not."
Neither of you need Fate's wind dread,
For—a gift from Heaven's throne—
Fondest love of all your kindred—
That is both your Babies' Own!

H. Chance Newton.

FOR HIS SAKE.

BY CLO. GRAVES.

CERTAIN it was that Mistress Belrose was the most beautiful of women, and one of the most accomplished players of her time. Mistress Woffington was before her, or, I hold to it, the lovely Peg would have found in her a dangerous rival. Mistress Belrose lacked the haughtier graces of her great forerunner: but, then, Woffington could never have owned a sweeter, mellower laugh, or moved with paces that seemed more attuned to the music of her voice. Mistress Belrose's face was open and sprightly, and she wore her chestnut hair free of powder, or with but a sprinkling. And her eyes were grey, or brown—'twas not easy to tell of which colour; and her skin, despite the paint of the playhouse, was clear, and purely cream. She was medium tall, of a lovely shape and make, with dainty little feet, and hands like two white doves for hue and gentleness of touch. I have spoken of her voice. 'Twas a very voice of voices—never to be forgotten if once heard! She was hasty-tempered—I have seen her maid that dressed her at the playhouse come crying from her room, with the red mark of a blow burning on the jade's cheek—but, at the same time, generous to a fault, and quick to own herself in the wrong, and to ask pardon even of her inferiors and dependants, and to pardon if the fault were on the other side. How many poor homes has she not made glad! How many impostors has she not sent away chuckling over the easily credited story and the readily granted boon! Her servants were rogues and thieves to a scratch-wig or a pinner, but they worshipped her even while they robbed her. And her lovers were many; for this fairest flower of the playhouse garden was not a blossom to go unplucked.

"Madam Misfortune." So the wits of the coffee-houses and the wags of the Mall had christened beauteous Mistress Belrose, and the strange name clung to her. 'Twas said—I know not with how much truth—that had lord or gentleman the best of luck and the fairest of fortunes ere he met her: did he but sue for and win her favour, he was a man marked for mischance from the day that gave him that gift. Securities became unstable, speculations played him false; his Kentish orchards failed from blight, or his Suffolk cattle died of the rinderpest. His lawyer turned rogue—though the miracle might be to find an honest man of tape and pouncet—or highwaymen robbed his steward, jogging homewards on his old hunter at close of a rich day's renting. Or his guardian cut him off with a shilling; or his bosom friend struck him in the face with his cane-tassel when words arose over the basset-board or the faro-table, and planted a red rose under his left ribs ere the sun rose over St. James's Park the very next morning. In whatever shape you please to imagine, misfortune came to all upon whom Mistress Belrose was pleased to smile; and, though 'twas her whim to accept nothing from her lovers, 'twas strange, as a great writer once said, to see how Fate and Death played bullies and claimed toll from her favoured gallants in the matter of money and life.

Now, lest wits be vainly sharpened as to what manner of man he be that writes—know all folks by these presents that a plain and homely married man, of the humbler class, once saved, by bounty of kind Mistress Belrose, from the pressure of poverty and the curse of an ignoble occupation, speaks to you by word of pen. As for the accomplishment of writing, that I gained in early youth, being articled to a scrivener in Gray's Inn by a worthy father—then in the tailoring way, who sought to raise his eldest-begotten above the level of the goose and shears—at the age of nineteen. It was a coarse service, and one poorly waged; my few weekly shillings being insufficient for the keeping of me, even on brown bread and thin ale, with a sixpenny plate of boiled beef from a cookshop in Fleet-yard on Sundays and holidays. But I complained not, having been used to poor fare and hard living from my youth up, and presently took a partner—my Prue, to wit, finding single starvation too lonely for my taste.

Ours was a fruitful union, but had I had heart to curse the innocent, puling creatures that came, singly and sometimes in couples, over the hard threshold of this bitter world, the words had been stayed upon my lips by my Prue's look of happiness as she held the tiny new creature to her motherly breast. How my father heard of my marriage, and closed his doors against me; how my scrivener died insolvent and went whither many clients had consigned him, by word of mouth—leaving us destitute; how I became a linkman, a hackney tout, and, finally, a bailiff's man—upon this it needs not to dwell. But 'twas in the last-named capacity that I first encountered Madam Misfortune, and the tale is worth the telling.

Mistress Belrose moved forward a step, and resting one lovely ungloved hand, sparkling with rings, upon the dingy oaken table, began to deliver a speech I heard long afterwards spoken in the playhouse.

"FOR HIS SAKE."

My bailiff master and myself were bid one morning to the house of one Richard Davis, an actor, who lived in Cockerell-street, in a narrow old house with a gloomy front, wedged in betwixt a tavern and a wig-maker's shop. I had no stomach for the work that lay before me, but use, and my own sorrows, maybe, had made me callous in a measure; and I minded not the poor wife's weeping on her fuddled husband's shoulder—he in a soiled satin waistcoat and breeches trimmed with rusty silver lace, and a ruffled shirt that screeched for the washtub, wearing his hair dishevelled and unpowdered, his knee-buckles loose, and his stockings wrinkled like Prince Hamlet's own; she in a paduasoy that had seen its best days on another woman's back—a mob cap dingy and frowsy, and her feet shod with carpet slippers. True, the children's crying gave me a lump in my throat, and their innocent questioning of their mother as to where dada was going, and what the ugly men—meaning me and my master—were going to do to him, made me picture my own poor brood in a like situation, when the room door opened, and a lady in a feathered hat and crimson cardinal came swiftly in.

Mistress Belrose—for it was she whom I now for the first time beheld—looked at the poor mistress with a quizzical shade of humour in her countenance—and indeed, in her papered ringlets, frowsy mob, and soiled paduasoy, the poor lady presented a sorry spectacle. Then, as both husband and wife were mightily confused at the sight of her, she went to them, and, clapping the man upon the shoulder heartily, and with so much the manner of a great boy that I was forced to smile, and kissing the woman on the cheek, thus says she:—

"Friends, I am sorry to see you in this strait!"

"'Twas I brought it on myself, what with drink and dicing," groans poor Davis. Davis was a personable man, and a fair actor. "And I but grieve for the poor wife and the children here."

"Thou wert ever a good husband and father, Dick," sobbed the poor wife, while the brats fell to bawling at hearing their father name them.

"How much is the debt?" asked Mistress Belrose, turning to my master. I thought then what a beautiful creature she was, and how the habit of the playhouse was so strong upon her that she looked and moved and spoke at this juncture of emotions as though she were upon the boards.

"Twenty-five guineas," my master blurted out, showing his writ, and without taking his foul pipe out of his unshaven jaws. "At the suit of Jenkins, mercer, of St. Paul's-churchyard."

"The most blameless debt I did ever incur," says Davis. "'Twas but to clothe my wife and children here."

"I have two others to back it," says my master. "One at the suit of a keeper of an ordinary in Farringdon Market, where you gave a supper to"——

"Ahem—ahem!" coughed Master Davis, and cast an appealing eye towards my master, who went on—

"And another taken out by a tobacconist, one Canaster, of Shoe-lane."

"I have smoked him for three months, and now he has put out my pipe for me," quoth Davis, with a twinkle of humour dawning in his sodden face, and peeping out at the corners of his swollen eyes.

"And what is the gross amount, fellow?" asked Mistress Belrose, still with the look and manner upon her that so mightily became her—of being in a play.

"Forty-five guineas nine shillings and three fardens," my master answered gruffly.

"I have not the tenth part of it about me," said Mistress Belrose, in answer to poor Davis's imploring look. "And I am as inveterate a gambler as thyself, Dick. I have played away all I had, and must e'en go penniless till treasury."

"Then best let the gentleman come along with me," put in my master. "I have a hackney coach at the door, as good as ever carried a gentleman to a sponging-house, with plenty of clean straw in it to boot." Here Mrs. Davis and the children raised a hullabaloo. One would have thought that Davis was going to Tyburn at least!

"Have you no bowels of compassion?" Mistress Belrose demanded, turning to my master and me. "Have you no wives and children of your own, that you can profit by the misery of wretches like these?" She took in the sobbing family with one great sweep of her arm, and shot lambent fire at us out of her wonderful eyes.

My master sheepishly mumbled something about duty to his employers. I was dumb and heartsick, for very shame of my hideous calling.

Seeing the effect she had brought about, Mistress Belrose moved forward a step, and resting one lovely ungloved hand, sparkling with rings, upon the dingy oaken table, began to deliver a speech I heard long afterwards spoken in the playhouse. It was quite new to me *then*.

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd."

'Twas the immortal hand of Shakspeare penned the words, nigh two hundred years agone. Afterwards I heard them spoken by the same lips upon the stage, but methinks they never sounded more sweetly than then, so apt, true, and touching was Mistress Belrose's delivery of them. I had not a faculty but that of hearing unparalysed, and my master was like one dazed. But, coming presently to himself, he pulled his warrant anew out of his pocket, swearing in good round terms that, witchcraft or no witchcraft, he would do his duty! I could have sunk into the very ground for shame, but sober time for reflection afterwards brought me the conviction that, perhaps, the honest wretch was in the right.

"I am a poor friend to thee, Dick," said Mistress Belrose, answering the actor's appealing look with a dainty shrug of her shoulders, "and have wasted good poetry on a pachyderm all to no purpose. Help thee I will, but at this moment how to lay my hand upon the money I cannot—— *Ah!*"

This exclamation drew my eyes in the direction of hers, which were fastened upon the window, which was not dirty or dim enough to hide the fact that a face was pressed against it from the outside, whose wild bright eyes were peering into the room. That Mistress Belrose was the object of their search was made plain to me by the way they leapt at her, and fastened on her beauty greedily.

"He follows me everywhere!" she murmured, with a little pant. Then she laughed hysterically, and clapped her white sparkling hands together. "Go, bring in yonder gentleman!" she said to me. "Tell him that Mistress Katharine Belrose wishes to speak with him." That was my first hearing of her name, by the way—a name which I have had kindly cause to remember since. But I was keen to show her that I was not so brutal as my calling might make me seem, and therefore hastened to obey her. 'Twas but to whip into the hall, softly open the door without disturbing the gazer at the window, slip behind him, trip him up in good old 'prentice fashion, gag him with my fustian sleeve, and with a heave of the loins toss him, lace, fripperies, sword, and all, over my stout shoulder, and carry him into the parlour. 'Twas a rough method of doing her will, but young Sir Harry Melchester—I afterwards knew him by that name—seemed to forget me, and

THE TOAST OF THE EVENING: "THE LADIES—GOD BLESS 'EM!"

my rough treatment of him, once he found himself standing in presence of his goddess.

"Madam, your servant," said he, shaking the traces of rough handling from him as a bird might settle its feathers, and making her a mighty fine bow. "I thought myself in the clutches of grimy Vulcan, but I perceive 'twas Eros brought me hither under one of his many disguises."

Mistress Belrose returned him a great sweeping curtsey.

"Sir Harry Melchester is always gallant," said she, in her lovely mellow tones. "I must ask pardon, in the name of this honest fellow, for his rough usage. But the truth is that, happening to stand in sore need of a champion just now, and happening to see you, Sir, accidentally looking in at the window"——

The young Baronet blushed.

"The Potentate of the kingdoms of this world climbed an apple-tree in the Garden of Eden merely to look upon a woman, Madam, and a lesser sinner banished from a sweeter paradise, and the presence of one fairer a thousand times than Eve, may be excused the act of peeping, I dare to say. 'Twas but to feed a starving heart through the longing medium of mine eyes"——

"That you stood upon a rusty grating and flattened your nose against a smutty pane," interrupted the lady. "'Tis a handsome nose enough, as noses go, though the fashions are always changing. And the passions, for that matter."

"Save when they are built upon true hearts," the young Baronet replied to her. "Then their foundation is of rock."

"And even rock can be blasted. When you take your Orders, Sir Harry, I will come and hear you preach. There is a very pretty Scriptural smack about your conversation. But I have really sent for you to lend me forty-six guineas, on the sole condition that you do not refuse me when I offer to repay you. Tiresome things! My pockets are generally well enough provided with them, save when they are needed. See for yourself! I am a pauper."

And she gravely emptied the contents of her large pocket on the table. Of money there was none, except a single pocket-piece in the shape of a Spanish gold doubloon, among a quantity of feminine trifles.

Sir Harry blushed with pleasure, and swore that his sword and his blood and his life were at the service of one who was his heart's queen and sovereign lady. With more to the same effect. But—

"Nay," she told him. "I only need your purse—at present. Here is poor Dick Davis going to the Rules of the Fleet for want of a sop to satisfy honest Cerberosus there." She pointed to my master, and beckoned him. "I cannot be generous with my own money, for, as I have said, I have none. But a good deal may be done by proxy. Mistress Davis will furnish us with ink and paper and pen, and this gentleman" — she indicated Sir Harry — "will pay the reckoning."

Sir Harry whipped out his purse and freed the poor actor from his creditors' claims in the twinkling of an eye, and with as delighted a look as though a marquisate had been conferred upon him, and presently handed Mistress Belrose to her coach. As she drove away he fell a-sighing, and presently, clapping his eye on me, bid me follow him to Bedford Market; where, having purchased Spanish oranges, costly French sweetmeats, and flowers in extravagant quantity, he entrusted them to me with an order to convey them to the lady's address in Soho, with the sender's devoted wishes, and to return to his lodgings, which were not far from the Market, with whatever message I should receive.

Thither I proceeded, and, knocking at the door of a large old house, was admitted to a handsomely appointed hall by a grave servant out of livery, and had my burden taken from me by the smartest waiting-woman, with the wickedest pair of black eyes that man, rich or poor, lord or bailiff, ever encountered. I was desired by her to wait while she saw her mistress. Coming back, she desired me to follow her, and in another moment I found myself, for the second time that day, in the presence of the Queen of the Stage.

She was reclining in a loose embroidered sack upon a sofa-bed, covered in yellow satin, and, indeed, the other furniture of the room was of corresponding richness, though the worse for use, not wear; as though it confined a passionate spirit that wreaked itself at times upon its surroundings. The mortal house of the fair creature who owned the Soho mansion was in like case, now I saw her unshadowed by her feathered hat, and in light that shone upon her clearly, undimmed by dirty glass. There was a worn look about the lustrous eyes, a thread or two of silver in the bright hair, lines about the supple lips already. But, for all that, her beauty blinded me, as it had done before.

"My honest tipstaff"—thus she addressed me—"are you come as the messenger of Love or the emissary of Law? My maid, here, says the one, but, for all that, the billet-doux that accompanies your burden may be written upon blue paper. If so, I must request you to carry it whence it came, and say that Mistress Belrose, christened Katharine, has an important appointment, this very evening, at the Court of Alexander, which is to be held at the playhouse in Covent-Garden, and, until she is comfortably dead, begs license to be at large."

Would that my weak words could suitably convey the drollery of her look and tone! I summoned boldness to speak from it, and in few words told her that I had left my employment behind me when I followed her out of Davis's house, and, come what might, never should again lend myself to a service so despicable.

"So I have made a convert," she commented, with another droll look. "And, now that I have taken the bread out of your mouth, what are you going to put into it, my good man?"

I thought of Prue and the children, and a sigh broke from my breast.

"'Twas an ill-paid profession, at best, Madam," I replied; "and the yoke had galled me for long. I can but live and hope for better times."

"Hope is a poor diet, my friend," said she, kindly. "I tried to subsist upon it myself years ago, and failed." Her beautiful brow became overcast, and she sighed as sadly as I, methinks.

"His honour the Baronet has promised me a crown for my errand," said I, "and that is as much as I am used to get in a week; and when that is gone, why, Prue and the children must"——

"Must not starve!" said Mistress Belrose, warmly. "I have but little influence, but I owe thee an employment. Let me see!" She rested her chin upon her beautiful hand, and thought. Suddenly she turned to me—her whole face alight with her idea—and cried: "I have it! You have seen better days, and have been well brought up, I'll dare swear! What do you think of the stage for a profession?"

"Madam!" I gasped.

"Here, take this book!" and she thrust a tattered volume into my hand. "Open where the leaf is turned down, and begin. Read, declaim, spout! Show me, in a word—or twenty—what you are made of."

The play was "Alexander the Great." I mumbled out a few lines, but my ears burned like fire, and my tongue seemed weighted with lead. Before I could proceed further she rose up and snatched the book and tossed it to the ceiling.

"Bravo!" She clapped her hands. "I have got it at last! You have proved your capacity for business nobly. There is a part in that very tragedy intended by Heaven, and written by the author, I verily believe, for you. You shall play it, too, or my name is not Katharine Belrose. Not that it is, you know!" she explained in a kind of aside. "We all take a false name to hide our blunders behind when we come upon the stage, and sometimes fools praise us by it, and love us by it, and so it sticks."

"But I—upon the stage!" I gasped.

"Why not?" asked she, demurely. "I have seen many a gentleman of your late profession waiting at the wings in my time. Why shouldn't you come half a dozen steps beyond them? As to your capabilities being fitted for the part, there is no doubt of it. Alexander the Great has a couple of dumb black slaves to attend him wherever he goes—on the stage. One of them was drunk and vociferous at rehearsal this morning. His place is vacant—it shall be yours!"

"Nay, but, Madam," I remonstrated, "seeing that I am of the European colour, and that Nature hath not bestowed upon me the qualification of dumbness"——

"There Art steps in to aid. You shall smudge your face and hands with soot out of the chimney; you shall wear a turban, hold your tongue, and carry a banner; and for all this you shall be rewarded at the rate of twelve shillings a week."

"Twelve shillings a week!"

"Ay! a poor pittance, as you would say."

"A pittance! A princely income, Madam," I shouted, already feeling the pressure of the turban on my brow. "Why, for twenty-four pence more I served as a lawyer's clerk! Thespis for ever! I kick over the stool, throw down the tipped staff, and mount the cart! When, Madam, shall I enter upon this auspicious vocation?"

"Be at Covent-Garden playhouse to-night. Here is a piece of paper upon which I have written, as you see. Show that to the guardian of the gate: it will silence two of his three heads, the remaining one will only spit at you—in an Irish brogue. Off with you now, for I am busy. Stop! When you return to the gentleman who sent you, remember that you have not been admitted to me, and that you bring no message back. Recollect that well, my friend, or I may happen to forget you, when the time comes."

And so I left her.

I found Sir Harry at his lodgings, in company of a friend; a handsome, carelessly dressed man of about thirty-five, who, although it was yet early in the day, was flushed and incoherent with wine. He wore a military undress, and powder, and his name was Captain Vollaire. On hearing—Heaven forgive me!—that I had not seen the lady, and that I brought no message back in acknowledgment of his delicate present, the young Baronet was much perturbed.

"By my soul, Vollaire," he broke out, "it's enough to drive a man mad. And I thought, this morning, that by a lucky chance I had made some way with her. Curse the luck! To-morrow will bring me the guineas back with a polite note of thanks, perhaps, or none. What is there about me so hateful to her, Vollaire? I'm none uglier"—the Baronet's speech betrayed a hint of country breeding when he was greatly moved or excited—"I'm none uglier than—than some who have won what I would give the whole world—if I had it—to win."

"Women are capricious, my dear Harry," put in Captain Vollaire. "If you had a hump, or a squint, instead of a straight body and a pair of blue eyes that the female sex—on my honour, Sir, all but one—have voted irresistible—she would fall at your feet. Whereas"——

"Whereas for two years past she has slighted me, scouted me, flouted me, made me the laughing-stock of the clubs and the coffee-houses, the butt of the Beefsteak, and the ass-eared Midas of the Mall. For my money, what is that? I'd give every penny of it, every acre of land for, for"——

The gentleman had forgotten me, standing near the door with my hat under my arm. I was waiting for the crown I had been promised, if the truth must be known. And in my heart I felt a pang of pity for the rich young nobleman, as I saw him turn to the window, and rest his arm upon the pane, and heard the sob of rage and love and longing that burst from his overladen young heart.

"You have served like Jacob," said Captain Vollaire, tossing off a bumper of claret, "and your Leah won't have anything to do with you, as you say, or your money, of which you have a great deal. By the way, I met my Lord Harrington this morning in St. James's Park."

"What of him?" interrupted Sir Harry, fiercely. "You like to taunt me, Vollaire, you know you do, for all your talk of friendship. What of him?"

"He had been relieved of the last coin of that superfluous incumbrance with which your honour is troubled," said Captain Vollaire, "in a lodging-house in Goodman's Fields. He borrowed a guinea of me, which I am not likely to see again. Perhaps you would be willing to exchange your present prosperity, with its ungratified aspirations, for Harrington's penniless condition, and the tender recollections which doubtless sweeten it. You know the story about him? You know that Fortune left Harrington when Madam Misfortune netted him with her smiles? You are also acquainted with the histories of Hay, Talbot, Colonel Evcrard, and a dozen more upon whom her favours have been bestowed?"

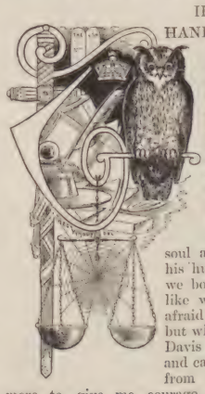
"Confound you! Hold that tongue of yours, or I'll cut it out of your head!" yelled Sir Harry, now fairly mad with wrath and jealousy, and clapping his hand to his sword.

"Gentlemen, for God's sake!" I called out, as the Captain started up from the table with a heavy cut-glass decanter in his hand.

"It 's time to go to the play," said he, setting the decanter down and arranging his ruffles. "There's no quarrelling with a madman or a man in love. Shall we call for a coach or walk? Covent-Garden is close by. And pay this fellow, Harry, and send him about his business. *Allons, done, mon cher!*"

And so I made my way out, with my blood boiling.

II.



THANKS to the interposition of Mistress Belrose, I was civilly received by the under-manager at the playhouse, and that very night enrolled as one of the Emperor Alexander's dumb slaves. I had never been present at a regular theatrical performance, much less ever trod the boards, and I felt my position a peculiar one. But I kept my eye upon my companion, who was a worthy soul and a good-natured, for all his huge turban and scimitar, and we both of us stuck to Alexander like wax. I had thought to be afraid of the terrible monarch; but when I discovered burly Dick Davis under his full curled wig, and caught a wink of recognition from the honest actor, that did more to give me courage than anything else. For Mistress Belrose spoke to and looked at none, except when the scene required it. She lived and breathed and moved as the injured Queen Statira, and such a terror was inspired by the melancholy dignity of her mien and the stateliness of her presence that I should have fallen down with sheer fright had her garments but brushed me as she went by. The Cibber was the Roxana. Great—incomparably great—was she in the part! but the melting tenderness and pathos displayed by Mistress Belrose drew all hearts to her, and invited tears from all eyes—especially from a pair of passionate blue ones that had looked longingly through the dirty window of Alexander's dingy lodging a few hours before.

On that night, and many nights after, I watched them darken and flame and melt in turn under the spell of a woman's genius. And when the very soldiers on guard, and the footmen in the gallery, and the candle-snuffers showed emotion, is it likely that one who loved her as poor young Harry Melchester undoubtedly did should remain callous and unmoved? But seldom was he missing from his seat in the front boxes when Mistress Belrose was announced to play. And on those rare occasions when he did not come, methought her acting suffered for it.

Did she scorn him as she seemed to? I think not! When she entered on the scene, I have seen—ay, in a moment—her look leap to him, and dwell upon him, proudly and sadly. When her marvellous voice sank to tenderness, it was to him, to him, the slighted lover, that those burning words were addressed. When it sounded the trumpet-note of passion and scorn, 'twas to him, I could have sworn, that she looked for sympathy. And the mute response was never wanting. Though once the curtain fell, the veil was drawn, and the secret that looks and tones had betrayed for one brief delirious moment or two was hidden in her breast once more. When he pressed through the crowd of link-boys and

THE MISTLETOE FAIRY

chairmen to hand her to her coach, she would look coldly on him, and recognise his courtesy with a brief, cold word. Then she would drive away with some ribboned and starred gallant of the Court beside her, perhaps, leaving the poor, handsome lad standing bareheaded in drizzling rain or falling snow that had no power to cool the hot heart beating underneath his silks and laces.

Christmas drew nigh, and, thanks to my engagement at the theatre and the generosity of Mistress Belrose, who had fallen into a way—not being as clever a penwoman as an actress—of employing me from time to time as her secretary and amanuensis, when her household accounts needed supervision, or her debts of correspondence grew too heavily in arrear—I found myself able to contemplate the present with satisfaction, and look towards the future with hope. My Prue and the children were as creatures regenerate, and, in proportion as we rose in the social scale, we sank lower as to our level of living, having left our starveling garret and descended to a genteel and comfortable fourth-floor back, with a golden prospect before us of occupying the parlours by-and-by.

The table at which I used to write my kind mistress's letters stood within a deep-windowed alcove, separated from her withdrawing-room by curtains of yellow satin. Here upon shelves were ranged her play books, and portraits of herself in different characters hung above the wainscot. And here, while waiting for her one morning, I overheard a conversation which was not intended for my ears.

"God forbid that I should reproach you, Madam," said poor Sir Harry, "with or without cause. I have but come here to plead for mercy, not for myself alone"——

"And for whom else?" put in my mistress, quickly. Watching her—I confess it with shame—through a chink in the curtains, I saw how her brow lowered, and her lovely eyes flashed fire.

And Sir Harry drew his noble figure up, and fixed his gaze earnestly on her, and answered briefly—

"For You."

In an instant her brow and neck and bosom grew to a burning red. But she bit her lip and tapped her foot upon the floor, and said—

"In all likelihood that prayer will be granted, Sir Harry—half of it, at least. I am always merciful to myself."

"Would that you were!" Sir Harry said. "Would God you were! Oh, Madam, before it is too late to undo what you have done, throw aside the mask! Cease to embitter the life of one who deeply, faithfully adores you, by a miserable pretence. Be just to yourself! Be generous to me! Acknowledge the truth that your hand and your lips have denied, but that your eyes have confessed to mine, over and over again. Say that you love me!"

Mistress Belrose started and grew deadly pale. One moment she seemed as if she would have fallen to the floor, and in another the vivid scarlet dyed her face and neck

Quick to seize his advantage, and mad with passion, Mr. Eustace lunged. And in that moment Mistress Belrose broke from the grasp of Captain Vollaire and threw herself upon that menaced breast.

"FOR HIS SAKE."

I, sitting idly flourishing my idle pen and thinking gratefully of my changed circumstances, heard the outer door open and close. Someone entered softly and hurriedly. Not a visitor, for no servant showed the way. Not my mistress, for the step was heavy, like a man's. I had barely made my mind up to see for myself who it might be, when I heard, for the second time, the opening of the door, and caught the rustle of my mistress's silks upon the carpet. Then I heard her exclaim, angrily and loudly—

"Sir! What do you do here? Leave the room at once—and the house—or I summon my servants."

And a voice which I recognised to be that of Sir Harry Melchester replied—

"On my honour, Madam, I mean no harm. Blame your own cruelty for having driven me to adopt this course. Go I will, but not until you have heard what I have to say."

Mistress Belrose replied, in haughty tones, that he might speak, but must be brief, as her time was limited as her patience.

"My stock of patience is worn out, Madam," said Sir Harry, "or I would not risk your displeasure in this boorish way. You know how long and how patiently I have made my suit to you. You have read my letters, protestations of undying passion, written with my heart's blood and wet with my tears. And my love you have professed to scorn, and my prayers you have met with denial."

"Is a woman not at liberty to bestow her love as she chooses, or to refuse it as she wills?"

To that Sir Harry answered "Ay!"

"Then," asked Mistress Belrose, "being justified out of your own mouth, in what am I deserving of blame and reproach?"

anew. She burst out into laughter, but the merriment sounded harsh and jangling.

"Are you so wise in your own conceit, Sir Harry Melchester; or so irresistible that a woman has only to look at you to love you? On my word, this is a scene for a comedy. I have been made love to often enough in my time, believe me, but never with such triple-plated assurance. Doubtless, in your opinion and that of the world, my position gives you the right to degrade and insult me"——

"Insult you?" he cried. "Never, never! When I implore you not to wrong your own heart—not to break mine! When I beg you to accept my fortune and my hand! When I say"—he threw himself at her feet—"'Be my mistress, my queen—and my wife!' is that insulting you?"

As the impetuous words broke from his lips—as he caught her dress in the earnestness of his pleading, I saw Mistress Belrose's fair figure waver as if a burning mist had passed between it and my eyes.

"Be my wife!" he prayed her. "Should I, loving you as I do, dare to harbour any less holy thought? Forgive the daring words I spoke just now. Pity my agony! Ah, I saw you weep once when a starving child begged you for charity in the street. There are tears in your eyes now! Bless you for them!—bless you!"

She dashed them away.

"As if we actresses had not always a store of such doleful drops at command. Sir, you are young, and good, and brave, and very, very daring, but not versed in the world's ways. You declare that you love me—you persist in asserting that I am not indifferent to you. You ask me to be your wife. Me!" There was a strange note of scorn in her voice as she continued, "You would share your honoured name, you would share your honest roof with one who could only bring disgrace upon both—misery upon you!" Her voice broke. "I have only a word more to say. Farewell!" She ended. "Some day I may even dare to add—God bless you!"

Oh, he was right! If those lovely, piteous eyes had ever told the truth to him, they told it then, even as she turned away and left him kneeling there.

III.

THE theatre saw Sir Harry no more for a while after that rebuff, but his name was tossed from lip to lip before long, as that of one of the wildest, handsomest, and wickedest young rakes of the town. An occasional glimpse I caught showed me a great change in him, the ruddy face having become bleached and haggard, while the demon of wine and play, and worse, looked out of the brave blue eyes where once sat enthroned the sad spirit of a hopeless love. Much I pitied the unfortunate young Baronet, but knew that it was as much as my place was worth to mention him to my mistress. In her, it seemed to me, there was a change, her spirits being wildly gay at one time and unreasonably dull at another, though the gallants who thronged about her swore by all the heathen gods in the Mythologia that she was divine in any mood and form of spirits. It must have been in one of these fits of depression that she sent for her lawyer, and afterwards summoned me to witness her will. I may here add that, having a sharp professional eye for such documents, I managed to throw a comprehensive glance over the page, in the very act of signing. And there I saw Sir Harry's name, figuring, as large as the engrosser's best hand could make it, as one of the principal legatees. What had she left him? Naught, as I am a man, and was once a scrivener, but the three volumes in which she kept her private diary, and a lock of her hair! Poor soul! Those who believe in warnings, my Prue among them, have said that she must have had a presentiment of the coming end.

How did it come? I have said that Christmas was close upon us, and 'twas like to be ushered in in a good old-fashioned way, with frost and snow to boot. Indeed, they roasted an ox whole upon the Thames between Westminster and Blackfriars, the ice having attained to so monstrous a thickness; while mail coaches were snowed up upon every high-road in Great Britain, and the icicles that hung from the eaves of the houses were full two feet long. In this state Christmas Eve found us.

Upon this night my dear mistress took her benefit at the theatre, playing the part of Callista in the tragedy of the "Fair Penitent"—a representation in which she excelled. When at last the play was over and the curtain had fallen, the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds. Again and again they summoned their darling before them, and she was exhausted and palpitating with emotion when at length released.

"Madam's coach," says her maid, peeping at me from the stairs, as I stood, according to my nightly custom, just inside the stage-door, waiting for my mistress to appear. Going outside into the alley, and looking about me, I was surprised to see that the vehicle was missing. But in its place stood a hackney-coach, with six horses harnessed to it, and a half-dozen of mounted soldiers keeping guard over it. A gentleman wrapped in a roquelaure, and riding a grey horse, seemed to command them. I saw him stoop to the window of the coach, and a flare from a torch carried by one of the soldiers, lighting up his features, revealed him to me as Sir Harry Melchester's military friend, Captain Vollaire.

Something like a cold chill ran over me. I knew nothing about presentiments of evil then, but am persuaded, now, that that strange feeling came with reason. I turned back to the stage-door, with intent to do or say I know not what; and just then Mistress Belrose came out of it, leaning on her maid, and accompanied by a gentleman. He was a handsome young author and wit about town, and they were speaking eagerly together of a new play of his, which, thanks to my mistress's influence, had been accepted by the manager of Covent-Garden.

"No, no!" said he—Eustace was his name—as my mistress bade him "Good night," "you will not refuse to let me see you to your coach." He raised his cane, and the hackney clattered up to the kerb, splashing the snow and mud upon both of them.

"Clumsy savages!" Mr. Eustace cried.

"That is not my coach," Mistress Belrose said, laughingly. "Fie! Do you think it takes six horses to draw me to and from the theatre?"

She ended with a cry of terror, for he whom I had recognised to be Captain Vollaire sprang from his horse and seized her by the hand. The door of the coach burst open, and out sprang Sir Harry Melchester, and laid an imperious arm about the lady's waist.

"An abduction!" roared Mr. Eustace, and drew his

sword, while I thrust forwards, brandishing my cudgel, and lustily shouting for help. A soldier struck my poor weapon from my hands, and another seized me by the throat.

"I know you, dog and coward!" cried Mr. Eustace, frantic with rage. He grasped the Baronet by the collar, and presented the point of his sword at his breast.

"Into the coach with her, Vollaire," cried Sir Harry, shaking the little author off, "while I pink this puppy." His sword leaped out like a flash of light, and a few passes were exchanged. It had gone hard with Mr. Eustace, had not Sir Harry's foot slipped on the frozen snow so violently that, in the effort to recover himself, his weapon flew from his hand. Quick to seize his advantage, and mad with passion, Mr. Eustace lunged. And in that moment Mistress Belrose broke from the grasp of Captain Vollaire and threw herself upon that menaced breast.

I shall never forget that sad, wild scene while life remains to me. The plunging horses, the assembled crowd, my mistress—my gentle benefactress—stretched upon the ground within the ring of torches—for she died ere we could move her—the snow red with that sweet blood, to save the shedding of which I would have given my own.

"Grieve not, Eustace!" she said faintly, stretching her hand to the poor author as he knelt beside her, groaning and tearing his hair. "'Tis all for the best, believe me." Then her eyes turned upon another face, that bent over her—a face wan and haggard with grief and self-reproach, and she smiled on the grief-stricken young fellow, in heavenly fashion.

"Bend down—thy face close to mine—Harry," she whispered. "I will make my confession to thee—before I die. Sweetheart, these eyes of mine told thee the truth, as thou didst guess, though my lips denied it. Raise me a little so that I may whisper more easily. So. Dear Love, I loved thee—all the time. But such a love as mine could bring no happiness to thee. And for another thing: I bring misfortune, they have said, to those whom I have loved, or thought I loved—before I saw and worshipped thee. 'Let me bring no evil at least upon this dearest one!' I prayed—yes, I prayed so, my Harry. I may call thee mine for this little space that is left me."

So she died, with his despairing kisses on her lips, resting in the arms from which she had fled, upon the hot wild heart that bled for love and grief of her, and has never known cheer since that night. The lock of hair that was her legacy to her lover lies upon his heart now, I doubt not—for he has ever remained faithful to her memory. For my own part, as the years pass and the end draws more clearly into view, I rejoice in the thought that my last journey on earth will close in dreamless sleeping in some quiet corner of the green old City churchyard where my kind mistress lies.

THE PASSING OF CHOWCUNDRA DASS.

AN EPISODE OF SHOWMAN LIFE.

BY O. P. Q. PHILANDER SMIFF (AGLEN DOWTY).

MINE has been an exceedingly chequered career, and ten years ago, soon after the collapse of my "Help-yourself Dining-Rooms" in High Holborn, I became the sole proprietor of "COTTERILL'S ROYAL MENAGERIE," a travelling collection of wild beasts, which I had the honour of exhibiting all over England and Wales during the years 1881-4.

Looking back to my managerial, or rather, let me say, "menagerie-al" experiences, I am bound to say that, on the whole, I enjoyed the wild beasts less than I did the travelling. Wild beasts are, in fact, "kittle cattle" to deal with, or to deal in, and, to parody the poet—

I never bought a bear or gnu,*
At price exceptionally high,
But surely in a month or two
That gnu or bear was sure to die!

The hot summer of 1882 proved exceptionally fatal to my collection; as I remember to my cost. The chapter of casualties began with the escape of the puma at Devizes. That beast was ultimately shot by the members of the local Volunteer Corps, after firing fourteen volleys.

Then, two days later, the Polar bear passed oozily away—if I may use the expression; and the rhinoceros sickened unto death, though I must allow that before the latter beast died at Bath he brightened up considerably, and I made a lot of money by admitting the public at advanced prices to see him rooting up the floor of his caravan with his horny snout.

By the time the menagerie reached Exeter, the hyena and the senior dromedary—colloquially known among us in the Show as "Good Old Doormat!"—had likewise gone the way of all flesh; while the jaguar was only being kept alive by the frequent administration of hot glue which had been boiled in Irish whisky.

It was, indeed, an anxious time for me, and when Jo-Jo, my lion-tamer, who had been a King in his own country, came to me as I was having breakfast with Mrs. Smiff in our living-carriage, the morning after our arrival at Exeter, to report that the biggest of the trick-lions had refused his matutinal meal of horse-shin, and was developing decided symptoms of influenza, I exclaimed, in the ill-advised though not unnatural bitterness of the moment—

"Go it! Why don't you come and tell me that the whole blooming collection is gone to grief?"

"No, no, Massa Smiff, Sah!" returned Jo-Jo, with that innate dignity of manner which always marked this expotentate of a dusky people. "No, no, Massa Smiff, Sah! Jo-Jo come and tell you dat, Sah, next week; but not to-day, Sah!"

"Why, what do you mean, you lion-taming humbug?" I retorted, in my wholly inexcusable irritation.

"All dat dis chile mean, Massa Smiff, Sah, is dat de influenza am a very ketchy-katchy ting, Sah. Ole brer tigah live next doah to de lions, Sah—*he* sure to ketch it. Den brer bar, he ketch it too, sure enuff, Sah; and den brer elephant, he"——

"Stop!" I shouted, "and go and look after that sick lion of yours. And give him a good strong dose of this," I added, tossing him the quinine bottle.

Well, as ill-luck would have it, Jo-Jo was about right: "brer tigah" *did* "ketch" the lion's complaint, and, though he eventually pulled through, his stripes were never a really good colour afterwards. As to "brer bar," three days after we got to Exeter he began to moult, and, at the end of a week, he was in such a hopeless condition that I was glad to sell him to a local hairdresser in the High-street for fifteen shillings.

Our finest antelope, too, caught "foot-and-mouth disease" from the farmers who came into the menagerie on market-day, and had to be summarily slaughtered by order of the District Sanitary Inspector; while, as though to prove once more that misfortunes never come singly—nor even trebly, for that matter—a veteran ostrich, one of the mainstays of the exhibition, after swallowing sixteen-pennyworth of halfpence, three phial bottles, and an indefinite number of alley-taws with consummate ease, was choked by a simple ginger-beer cork, which happened to go the wrong way!

It was, indeed, with a heavy heart that I made my way back with the menagerie to Taunton with a collection of animals so depleted that I was glad to eke out the "MONSTRE PROCESSION AND UNPARALLELED DEMONSTRATION OF PRACTICAL ZOOLOGY IN ITS MOST INTERESTING PHASES" (*vide* small bills) which paraded the streets of the town, with a Frenchman's performing bear, which we had overtaken on the road from Tiverton, and with the engine belonging to the local Amateur Fire Brigade.

There was, in fact, but one rift in the dark clouds that at this period closed about me as a menagerie proprietor, and that was that the elephant did *not* "ketch" the influenza. "Jumbo Redivivus," as this valuable quadruped was styled on our posters (his more familiar name was "Silly Billy"), seemed, indeed, to be disease-proof, and, under the untoward circumstances I have briefly detailed, became a veritable tower of strength to the menagerie, both outside and inside its canvas walls.

For not only, gaily caparisoned in gorgeous trappings, bearing my wife on his back got up as Britannia, did he form the most popular feature in the street procession, but he also carried little boys and girls inside the Show at a penny a head with an assiduity which proved most profitable, while the money I cleared on the biscuits and nuts he so indefatigably "tucked away" with his trunk, at the expense of visitors, formed no unimportant item in the daily receipts.

At Taunton, especially, good old "Silly Billy" seemed to rise to the occasion with an energy which not even the carrying of the whole of the children of the Board school of the borough on his back at half-price could subdue. It was here, too, that he first developed a quenchless thirst for ginger-beer, which, as twopence-halfpenny was cleared on every stone bottle sold at our nut and cake stall, also proved the source of considerable gain.

Altogether, the week passed at Taunton was a much better one, financially speaking, than I had expected it to be, and I was therefore led to extend our stay for a couple of days, the more so seeing there was to be a great Good Templar Festival in the town, for which I prepared by extensively billing the place with posters, headed:—

GOOD TEMPLARISM EXTRAORDINARY!

THE CHAMPION GINGER-BEER DRINKING ELEPHANT OF THE WORLD,

JUMBO REDIVIVUS

(from Secunderabad),

NOW EXHIBITING AT

COTTERILL'S ROYAL MENAGERIE.

N.B.—Admission to Children under Twelve, and to Good Templars wearing their full Regalia, Half Price!

The way those G.T.s availed themselves of this concession was most marked, and the lavish style in which they "stood" ginger-beer to "Silly Billy" even more remarkable. I was, in fact, busily engaged in counting up the day's takings with Mrs. Smiff in the Polar bear's caravan—then, alas! untenanted—when the faithful Jo-Jo (at whose erst regal position in his native land I have already hinted) came up and announced the arrival at the side entrance of the menagerie of a visitor who, to use the lion-tamer's own words, had said he "must see de massa, Sah, on particukulah business."

"Must see me?" I replied. "But what is he like, Jo-Jo?"

"He am a gennelman ob cullur, massa," returned the whilom monarch of another continent.

"Oh! a lion-tamer, I suppose?" said I.

Jo-Jo shook his head. "No, massa," said he, "him not dat. His name is Chowcundra Dass, he say, Sah."

"At any rate, I'd better see him," I answered; "so bring him here, Jo-Jo."

Chowcundra Dass, when he was brought up, looked very much like what you would expect a man with such a name to look. A long, lean, dark-eyed, sallow-faced inscrutable Hindoo was he, with a voluminous white turban on his head and a cassock-like garment clinging about his spare body, while across the latter was stretched a bright green scarf of watered silk bordered with a heavy silver fringe. On his left breast, too, was a gaudy badge, which, after the day's experience, I knew to be the distinguishing mark of a District Worshipful Master of the Independent Order of Good Templars.

On approaching me my visitor made a profound salaam.

"Well," I asked, "what is it you want?"

"The Sahib's pardon for presuming to approach his never-to-be-too-much-magnified presence!" was the reply.

"And now you *have* presumed," I answered, "what's your business with me?"

"The Sahib is lord and master of a mighty elephant," said Chowcundra.

"Well?" I queried, "and what if the Sahib is?"

"Chowcundra Dass has seen that elephant," said my visitor, "and his heart is young again within him."

"What, the elephant's heart is?" I asked.

"Nay, Sahib: the heart of Chowcundra Dass!"

"And why Chowcundra Dass's?"

"Because, Sahib, that mighty elephant when a baby was the friend of Chowcundra's youth in his far-off native land."

"The dickens he was!" I exclaimed. "Why, I always understood that 'Silly Billy' was a hundred years or so old at the very least!"

"Nay, Sahib; that cannot be," said the Hindoo, firmly but respectfully; and then he went on to tell me at considerable length how he had recognised the elephant that morning in the street, by a scar on its trunk, as one which had saved his life in the streets of Shuttadore some thirty years before, when he was but a boy and the elephant but a juvenile tusker.

"He took me, Sahib," said Chowcundra, "from under the very feet of an elephant which had gone *must*, and put me tenderly on his back."

"Well, and what of it?" I asked curtly, being anxious to get on with my counting-up.

"Only this, Sahib," returned C. Dass, with another salaam: "all my life since have I passed in seeking for my deliverer, and, now that I have found him, I only ask to be allowed to devote the rest of my days to his service."

All this sounded very funny, you know; but my visitor spoke so earnestly and respectfully that he certainly impressed me favourably.

"I know much about elephants, Sahib," Chowcundra went on, "and can tame them to my will, and teach them tricks which are funny to be looked upon."

"Then what you really mean, Mr. Dass," I said, somewhat harshly, "is that you want to be engaged as old 'Silly Billy's' keeper, at fifteen shillings a week and your grub?* Isn't that about the size of it?"

"What the Sahib suggests is about the size of it is not the dimension of Chowcundra's desire at all," replied my visitor. "All he asks is to be allowed to be the slave of the never-to-be-too-much-thanked elephant which you call 'Sillee Billee.'"

"But how about this, then?" I asked, pointing to Mr. Dass's green watered-silk scarf.

"Nay, Sahib," said Mr. D.; "Chowcundra has dwelt long enough in the lodges of the Sons of Rechab. Yea, gratitude is more to be desired than ginger-beer! Moreover," he added solemnly, "it is the will of Buddha!"

Well, not to make my story too long, the interview ended in my engaging C. Dass, at a weekly wage of what is colloquially known as "nuppence"—for he insisted on his work being a labour of love—to be "Silly Billy's" keeper, he having first given me optical demonstration of his curious influence over elephantine feelings.

Two days later, Mr. Dass joined our menagerie. And marvellous it was to see how "Silly Billy" took to him from the very first, and began to follow him about like a pet dog. There seemed, indeed, something almost uncanny in Chowcundra's powers; but, as he used them in teaching the elephant to stand on its hind legs on a bucket, to turn a barrel-organ with its trunk, and to perform other such amusing tricks, I was quite content to let him employ them to the uttermost.

A week, indeed, after Mr. Dass's engagement I was able to get a new poster printed devoted especially to my wonderful performing elephant, Jumbo Redivivus, and in a

* I never bought a gnu, really; but "buffalo" wouldn't rhyme, you see.—O. P. Q. P. S.

* I had, as a matter of fact, been hitherto giving a guinea a week to my elephant-keeper, but of course Mr. C. D. wasn't bound to know that.—O. P. Q. P. S.

AN OLD ENGLISH CHRISTMAS: "'TWAS MERRY IN THE HALL."

CHRISTMAS MORNING: THE ROAD TO CHURCH.

fortnight so great was the sensation created by him that the public flocked to the menagerie in thousands, and the receipts went up in the most gratifying way.

All the while Chowcundra Dass, who persisted in taking no wages, behaved in the same respectful and quiet manner, and I felt quite angry with Jo-Jo when, on several occasions, that ex-potentate of another and a warmer clime expressed to me his suspicions of his new comrade.

Three weeks after Chowcundra Dass's arrival we were at Bath again, and, after a splendidly successful day, I was counting-up the takings and stowing them away, as usual, in the money-chest, which I kept for safety in the tiger's caravan, when Jo-Jo, still panting after his exertions in the lion-hunt which he had conducted, came up, and said abruptly—

"Massa Smiff, Sah, dat Hindoo niggah am a dam bad lot, Sah!"

"How dare you, Jo-Jo?" I replied. "Such language from one who has enjoyed a regal position in his own continent is inexcusable!"

"All de same, massa, I mean it," said my lion-tamer. "If dat Hindoo trash am not a dam bad lot, why am he always sneakin' aroun' massa's caravan where the plate-chess am?"

"Jo-Jo," I exclaimed sternly, "such mean suspicions are unworthy of your erst monarchical position! I will hear no more of them!"

"Very well, massa," returned the whilom occupier of a distant throne; "den all dat diss chile will say is dat he fear massa will hear no more of his plate-chess neider."

"Go away, Jo-Jo!" I exclaimed angrily, "or I shall forget that you once occupied a dynastic position among your own people!"

And so the interview terminated.

* * * * * *

That evening Chowcundra seemed more respectful and devoted than ever, and, tired as he was with a heavy day's duties, I found him at supper-time busily engaged in teaching "Silly Billy" to thread a needle with his trunk.

"Sahib," he said, salaaming as usual, "if it pleases you, I will take 'Silly Billy' out to-morrow while the day is yet young, and will distribute many handbills at the abodes of the people."

"Do so, by all means, worthy Chowcundra," I replied, "and, if you will, take Parkerson with you also."

Now, Parkerson was the leader of our menagerie band, who played the cornet.

"Nay; if the Sahib will permit," replied C. Dass, "I will go alone, and will myself play on the tom-tom of my ancestors!"

"Just as you like, Chowcundra," said I; and then we all went to supper.

* * * * * *

It must have been soon after daybreak the next morning (the month was August) that the distant sounds of "tom-tomming" told me that the excellent Dass was already off on the elephant on his projected advertising round.

"Worthy Chowcundra!" I said to myself, as I turned my head on the pillow. "And how cheap, too!" I complacently murmured, as I fell asleep again.

The Show opened at 10 a.m., and, although Mr. Dass and the elephant had not returned at that hour, I was not at all alarmed about his safety. He has gone a little farther out of Bath than he intended, thought I, and has no doubt lost his way. Then, so confident was I that he would soon reappear, I signalled to Parkerson to strike up with the band, and told Mrs. Smiff to take up her place as money-taker at the top of the wooden steps leading to the public entrance to the Show.

Just at that moment, however, Jo-Jo, already attired in the tiger-skin tunic and ostrich-feather diadem of the lion-tamer, put out his head through the crimson-velvet curtains behind my wife and beckoned to me with his black first finger.

"Massa Smiff," he said, drawing me up to the tiger's den, "look at dat, Sah!" He pointed to the money-chest, which the tiger was pushing about the floor of its cage with playful ease.

"It must be empty, Sah," cried Jo-Jo eagerly, "for ole brer tigah to be able to pitch him about like dat."

"Empty!" I exclaimed. "Why, there's forty-two pounds' worth and more of bronze pennies in it, besides the seventeen pounds in silver we took yesterday."

"Ah, massa," rejoined Jo-Jo, "didden dis chile say dat dat cullud Hindoo was a dam bad lot?"

"Then do you mean to suggest that Dass has taken it?" I shouted.

"Why, certumly!" replied Jo-Jo, with, I am bound to say, an audible chuckle.

Just then the tiger turned the chest over with a stroke of its paw, and, the cover flying open, I saw, to my consternation, that it was indeed empty.

"And massa's plate-chess?" queried the merciless Jo-Jo; "when did um see dat lass—eh, Sah?"

I did not answer, but rushed off by the side door to our living-carriage at the back of the Show. The plate-chest still swung in its usual place under the caravan; but one touch was enough to convince me that its contents had also been abstracted.

Yes, it was but too true—my presentation tea-service; my silver trowel, with which I laid the corner-stone of the Mudborough Public Baths and Washhouses; my Challenge Cup, won by my deftness at the sword exercise when I was in the West Clodshire Yeomanry Cavalry; my fiddle-pattern forks and spoons; my masonic jewels; my collection of early English coins—all, all had gone, in their familiar cases!—as Charles Lamb *doesn't* say!

As I turned round, after satisfying myself of my loss, I found Jo-Jo at my elbow. "Am dat Hindoo rubbish a bad lot, or am he not?" he asked eagerly.

"But how *could* he carry it away, even allowing he stole it?" I asked plaintively. "Why, that forty-seven pounds' worth of coppers alone are more than a Samson could lift."

"Massa forgets dat Chowcundra had de elephum wid him," said Jo-Jo. "Dat ole brer Sillee Billee, he as strong as a house, he am, an' dis chile warrant dat all de proputty was stowed away in his howdah."

* * * * * *

Hoping against hope, I returned to the stage in front of the menagerie, and promptly stopped the band. "Ladies and gentlemen," I said, addressing the crowd, "I regret to state that owing to the serious indisposition of the champion performing elephant, Jumbo Redivivus, this menagerie will not be opened this morning."

Then, while Mrs. Smiff returned their money to those who had already passed in, chiefly to see the elephant which was no longer on view, I hurried off to see the Superintendent of the Bath police.

"Is this Chowcundra Dass, as he calls himself, a hang-dog-looking scoundrel with a bilious eye?" that official asked, when I had told him my sad story.

"He is, he is!" I answered eagerly.

"Then you can say good-bye to your property," he replied, "for you have, I believe, been robbed by one of the cleverest rascals in the country—a native of Benares, who originally came to this country as a snake-charmer, with the Futtepore Fakeer Troupe, in 1877."

"But surely he can be arrested?" I rejoined. "A man riding about on an elephant can easily be 'spotted.'"

"You don't think he means to live on the elephant, do you?" retorted the Superintendent. "By this time the rascal has doubtless reached Bristol, and has got all your stolen property safely on board some foreign steamer which he had found out, by previous inquiries, was to sail to-day. No, no, Mr. Smiff! I am sorry for you, but I don't think you will ever see one penny piece of your portable property again."

And, as a matter of fact, I never did, for that rascally Chowcundra Dass managed to get clear off out of the country, having, as I soon found out, first sold "Silly Billy" to the proprietors of the Bristol Zoological Gardens for £75, and a savage cobra which they wanted to get rid of.

I remained in the wild-beast line for some years after the "Passing of Chowcundra Dass," but I never engaged another keeper who offered to come for "nuppence" a week. For, as the one-time regal Jo-Jo sententiously observed to me at the time, "Golly, massa, dat sort o' trash dat offers to come for no wages is wuth considerabul less dan nothing, Sah!"

And, upon my word, after a considerable and varied experience, I am inclined to think that the lion-tamer who was once a King in his own country was right.

THE MESSAGE OF THE BELLS.

BY KATE BISHOP ("KAY BEE").

HARK! once again the Christmas bells their solemn vigils keep,
Which lull and yet awaken old feelings from their sleep;
But breathing o'er the hamlet's calm, born in their joyous swells,
There springs to life another tale in the message of the bells.

Ding-dong! our sweet song now is one of glory,
Long ago, soft and low, we told another story;
Calling peace and love's increase, faith and hope and truth.
From where they sleep, those memories deep, in the vales of youth!

'Tis more than twenty years ago since first the tale was told—
By many half forgotten—and yet it 's never old;
And in one home the record 's kept, unfading through long years,
And when the bells remind them 'tis read again with tears.

Two lads dwelt in the village where the old church steeple towers—
They were reared as close companions—dear friends since childhood's hours.
When one was glad, the other's smile the story soon would tell.
If Martin frowned, another shade would cloud Dick's brow as well.

And so the happy years flew on, until, one Christmas day,
They saw the miller's daughter brushing the snow away
From the mill steps; and when the bells their silver stream had run,
Their echo was not half so sweet—the discord had begun.

The old mill-wheel was silent, but Love's wheel whirling went,
Dispersing dews of friendship from the hearts once closely blent.
And Bessie favoured Dick—she guessed that he 'd the noblest mind:
Then honour went from Martin's heart, and left revenge behind.

Love sometimes springs life's sweetest buds to bloom to noble deed;
But often mid heart-flowers it springs a poisoned weed.
'Twas so with him: to spoil their lives and love he thought and worked—
And they little guessed the serpent that in their Eden lurked.

But Dick soon saw that Bessie's face a thoughtful shadow wore,
And she came no more to meet him at the mill-wheel, as of yore.
And when the bells rang out again the liar had his will,
For they rang for Martin's wedding with Bessie of the mill.

For he told her Dick was false to her, and other lies he spread,
Till Bessie, wild with anger, gave him her hand instead.
Alas! that noble hearts should fall beneath a coward's blow,
And lose their all through others' sins!—and yet 'tis often so.

And Dick, once of the village lads the gayest and the best,
Stung by Falsehood's poisoned arrow to the cynic's cold unrest,
Could never bear to hear those bells, once loved in happier times—
For had they not rung out his knell, in Bessie's wedding chimes?

That Christmas, through the blinding snow he went to Martin's place,
And, through the casement, gazed once more at Bessie's altered face:
He saw the tears that fell for him—one look, and he was gone,
With prayers for vengeance on his lips. While still the bells rang on.

He left them all behind him—the village and the mill,
And journeyed to that far-off land where gold is gained at will:
The land that he and Martin had talked of once with awe,
Beyond the Rocky Mountains—the New World's virgin shore.

So he lived among the miners, as stern and rough as they,
Longing for vengeance on the man who 'd lied his all away;
And, though he did not seek it, success came fast and thick,
And he was a king among them—they called him "Silent Dick."

One night, near Christmas-time, the camp was roused, the miners came
Dragging a man between them, who hung his head in shame.
He 'd been caught red-handed, robbing the miners of their gold,
So they brought him to be judged by Dick, who faced him stern and cold.

He knew the stranger knew him, though not a look betrayed
His coming vengeance on the man who a wreck his life had made;
And Martin knew him—knew as well that his vile life was at stake,
And, bursting from the men, he cried, "Forgive, for Bessie's sake!"

That name roused all the smouldering hell in Dick to fiery breath,
And, pointing to a tree, his voice, relentless, thundered "Death!"
But, as they dragged the man away, a *something* faint and dim
Came through the distance, causing Dick to quake in every limb.

Yes; solemnly and sweetly the church bells rang out clear,
While the rough men crouched in terror, for they knew no bells were near.
There, mid the Rocky Mountains, far from the Christian tongue,
Rising and falling, loud yet soft, the spectral bells still rang.

Had some bright angel touched the chimes and wafted here their swells?
Or were they only dreaming when they thought they heard the bells?
No; clear they came, awaking thoughts, and eyes with teardrops shone,
While in a burst of holy joy the mystic chimes rang on.

They ceased; and then the miners, crouching upon the sod,
Gazed awestruck at the heavens, and murmured, "It was God!"
The wrath of years was swept away, by those sweet chimes beguiled;
And Dick forgave, for Bessie's sake, and wept just like a child.

And so, next day, the two old friends clasped hands in peace once more,
And, with gold in plenty, Martin sailed for the English shore;
While Dick, with softened thoughts of home, amid the tropic hum,
Thanked Heaven, to save his soul from crime, the spectral bells had come.

Years after, through the village a man passed on to where
The whirling of a mill-wheel made music in the air,
Where a woman came to meet him—a vision from the past—
And Bessie's arms were round him, and her sweet voice said, "At last!"

She was free, and Dick from o'er the sea had come to claim his own,
Their hearts but cleaved the closer for the parting they had known.
As they stood in that sweet silence, which love's story mutely tells,
There softly came to them once more the message of the bells.

FORTY THOUSAND.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

"CONFOUNDED humbug!" I said sourly, in answer to a question. "That 's what I take you for."

"Sir!" said my companion sharply, as he set down his camera and seemed to glare at me with one eye, while with the other he watched the graceful form of the veiled lady, while the guide lifted her from her horse to the broad wooden steps, down which she tripped lightly, and waited while her brown-leather bag was unstrapped from behind the saddle. This bag she took with one hand, her young husband's arm with the other, glanced quickly at us both, and then, stiffly acknowledging my bow, they walked into the little châlet-like hotel.

"Yes," I said, turning to my companion again, and looking him full in the face, "you can be offended if you like, but I 'm an Englishman, and, whether I am in Fleet-street or here in this narrow out-of-the-way Swiss valley, I speak plainly, Sir. I repeat, in answer to your question what do I take you for, that I take you for a humbug: and I tell you that if I were that young lady's husband instead of plain G. Scribe, paper-stainer, of London Town, I 'd give you a confoundedly good thrashing."

"Nonsense!" said my companion, warmly.

"Well then, Sir, you should me."

"You don't understand the case, Mr. Scribe," he said.

"Oh yes, I do, Sir!" I retorted. "We met out here travelling, I doing nothing, you with your camera making shots, as you call it, at the prettiest bits of scenery. I found you gentlemanly and well-informed."

My companion bowed and smiled, with a sarcastic look in his eyes.

"Our tastes seemed similar, and for a time we got on well together. But when I find that the man I made my companion is playing a miserable contemptible part, and turning his foreign tour into a wretched dangling crawl after a handsome woman, evidently just married, and trying to undermine the happiness of her young husband, why—confound it all, Sir! my gorge rises, and I say!"——

"Now, my dear Sir, just listen!"

"I will not, Sir! Just have the goodness to tell me which road you intend to take in the morning, and I'll take the other."

"No, no, listen a moment!"

"Your conduct will bear no explanation, Sir!" I cried hotly. "I 'm not above a flirtation with a pretty girl—at least I used not to be—once; but to see you following that lady from hotel to hotel day after day, and to find that I am being turned into a blind or a buffer to shield or shelter you—I won't stand it, Sir! Hang you and your camera! We part to-night, and you don't catch me taking up with casual acquaintances again."

"Done?" said my companion coolly.

"Yes, Sir, I have," I said, and walked into the hotel, where the lady in question bowed and smiled as she entered the coffee-room with her husband, and then sat down at one end of the table while I took the other.

It was about an hour later that I went out into the long corridor to go to my bed-room and fetch my cigar-case from that brown-leather bag which shared my travels. I was still angry, and turning over my quarrel with the man who had been my companion for the last fortnight, when I saw that the bag was strapped up as it stood on the chair by the bed, and then I turned, darted out, and hurried into the next room, for I had entered that of the two late comers by mistake.

II.

I took my cigar-case and went into the verandah to sit and smoke, watching the Alpine glow on the snowy peaks which peered above the steep sides of the valley, and I had just exhaled six little clouds of fragrant smoke, when my cast-off travelling companion came and seated himself at the opposite side of the little round table.

Hot with indignation, I was about to rise, but he laid his hand on my arm and said gently—

"We are two Englishmen out here among strangers. One ought to be fair to the other."

"I have behaved fairly to you, Sir."

"No; you have not."

"What?" I cried.

"Speak lower, my dear Sir!" he said gravely.

I lowered my voice, in spite of myself, as I said sharply, "Do you mean to tell me that your camera is not an excuse for following those people about wherever they go?"

"No," he said coldly.

"Then how have I played unfairly to you?" I retorted.

"In misapprehending my motives."

"How?"

"You thought I was following them for love."

"Well?"

"I am following them for money."

I stared at him, and saw that his eyes were keenly fixed on mine, in the soft evening light, and that there was an intensity in his countenance that I had not noticed before.

"We must not quarrel and separate, my dear Sir," he said; "for you are so useful to me now in my quest, that, if we parted, it might mean the destruction of my plans."

"Well, of all the"——

"Now, Sir, don't be rash," he said sternly. "Let me explain my position. I did not mean to open out to you, but you have forced it on. There is my card. Look at it when you get to the light. I 'll tell you who I am—I am partner in a large stockbroker's in Throgmorton-street; and a short time back my partners and I awoke to the fact that a scoundrel in our employ had allowed himself to be led away by a clever swindler, and, to make a long story short, shares of the value of forty thousand pounds were one day abstracted from our safe, and passed over to the tempter, with the understanding that our clerk was to share the plunder—the paper being easily negotiable. But he found himself thrown over by the scamp who had led him astray, and in his rage, fortunately for us, he came and made a clean statement of the matter, giving us such information that, instead of placing the matter in the hands of the police, I determined, with my partner's consent, to follow the fugitive myself."

"You astound me!" I said.

"Possibly," he replied. "Well, I need not enter into further particulars more than to say that I traced the swindler from London to Dover, over to Calais, through France to Lucerne, where I met you, and then on and on from place to place, as you have seen, not as an amateur detective, but as a tourist with his camera."

"But you don't mean to say" —— I began.

"Yes, I do, Sir. I mean to say I am nearly certain that the good-looking, gentlemanly young fellow with his pretty wife is my man."

"And the brown bag which she always has with her?"

"Contains forty thousand pounds' worth of shares belonging to my firm!"

"Oh, impossible!" I exclaimed, after a few minutes' thought.

"No, Sir; possible," he whispered. "You had noted how jealously the lady always carried the bag."

"But they leave it in their room," I said.

"Never open, Sir. Believe me: I am right. The information I received fits in every way. That is my man."

"Then why haven't you had him arrested?"

"Because I am not sure enough to proceed to extremities—at all events, I do not wish to till I am more certain. At present my plan is to keep him in view, and that I shall do."

"Till he gives you the slip," I said with a laugh.

"That I don't think he will manage. To begin with, he is not suspicious, and I do not wish to excite his suspicions in any way; hence, I ask you, now that I have removed your scruples about my intentions, not to break with me, but to remain in my company."

"Well, I can hardly promise that," I said. "Amateur detective work is not in my way. There: I 'll sleep on it."

I did sleep on it soundly, after thinking to myself that it might prove ugly for my friend if he were right, and the good-looking little husband suspected him. How easy out there, in one of the lonely valleys or passes, to—— Ugh! What ugly thoughts it all suggested of a push, a shot, or a stab!

But a day out in the mountain air generally means little space between lying down and becoming too sound to dream. It was so in this case, and I slept long, and went down to breakfast late.

"Der Herr—der andere Herr—is not down," the waiter said in mixed language.

"And the gentleman and lady who came after us?"

"Dey go on at five o'clock."

I glanced at my watch. It was nine, and my first thought was that my friend was in pursuit, but I soon found that he had not left his room, where he was still sleeping heavily.

I awakened him at last, to sit up holding his head as if it were confused; and as soon as I had told him of the departure he flushed up and turned to the water-glass on the wash-stand.

"Drugged!" he said, as he took it up and tasted it: "I thought it peculiar last night."

"Then they suspect," I said.

A little questioning of the waiter indorsed my words. The other Herr had smoked his cigar under the verandah and came in late to order the breakfast and horses at five—quite a regular proceeding on the mountains, where the journeys are best made in the early morning, and they had about five hours' start.

III.

For three weeks I joined heart and soul with my companion in the pursuit of that pair, for there was interest and excitement in the chase. At one time we seemed to have news of them, at another we had lost all trace; but at the most hopeless times we contrived to pick up the clue again, and, after wandering half over Switzerland, we woke to the fact that the good-looking young pair with the brown bag were making across France, and possibly for Calais.

"It is evident to me now," said my companion, "that that young man only looked upon me as one likely to prove disagreeably attentive to his wife."

"Seems so," I said, "or he would have bolted right off. You think, then, he is making for England?"

"Yes, I do; and if we get near now, as soon as we are in our own land I shall risk all, and have him arrested."

"And seize the bag?"

"And seize the bag, of course."

The scent grew warmer as we approached Calais one stormy day—so warm, in fact, that, after making sundry inquiries, my companion had no further hesitation, and, taking our bags, we stepped on board the dripping boat, which had just had a rough passage across.

"Well?" I said, ten minutes after.

"All right," he said joyfully: "they are in the cabin."

We were soon under weigh, with the sailors rigging up canvas shelter above the bulwarks, handing round tarpaulins, and generally preparing for a rough passage. And a rough passage we certainly had, the spray drenching the captain on the bridge, and the steamer literally seeming to quarrel with and fight the short choppy sea.

I was not ill, and my companion was too much excited to be troubled in the customary way. He had his quarry aboard, and he had made his plans, keeping careful watch over the cabin-door, while I sat sheltered by one of the boats which hung on the davits above my head, and protected my brown Gladstone from the drenching spray.

We were about half over, when I saw the steward and a couple of the sailors busy by the cabin-door, and directly after they half carried an almost inanimate bundle of clothes and waterproofs to place it upon the seat beside me, two more sailors assisting a second, and a boy bringing a brown Gladstone bag and bundle of shawls to act as pillows for the unfortunates who had invaded my wet solitude, and now perfumed the place with brandy.

"I should have died, Marian; I should have died down there!" was groaned close by me; and I looked sympathetically at the pale, drawn face surmounted by smooth grey hair.

Oh! how those two poor women did suffer, and how my companion and I did sympathise with them!—well, yes, and help, to the extent of getting hot tea and spilling it over them; brandy, and shedding half on the deck. It was mostly I, for my companion watched the cabin entrance like a dog. I tucked them up and rearranged the bag and shawls, and behaved as humanely as I could, for the passage was terrible, and we were two hours late, after nearly putting back to Calais harbour.

But there was the smooth water behind the pier at last, and in my natural gladness of heart I helped the old lady and her niece ashore, handing them their brown bag and shawls, et cetera, they both being too ill even to stand, and being carried across the gangway amid the derisive jeers of the cads assembled to see their fellow-creatures suffer.

When I returned to my companion, after glancing at the wet seat to see that my bag was all right, he was still by the cabin-door, the Custom House officers were busy, and the deck was clearing fast.

"Not come up?" I said.

"No," he replied hastily, as he beckoned, and I saw that it was to an officer on the pier.

"You mean business, then?" I said.

"Business? Yes. I've got them now, and I'll hold them."

He said this through his teeth, and I stood by him waiting till the officer had got on board, and had a short conversation with him, after which my companion went down below.

In less than a minute he was up again, staring blankly.

"Gone!" he said.

"Impossible!" I cried.

"No: gone. Unless they are in hiding somewhere."

But they were not, and they had not fallen overboard.

"I have it!" I exclaimed suddenly, as a light flashed upon me.

"Where?"

"Those two—the old woman and her maid. We 're done."

"I'm——"

Well, I should be sorry to put on paper what he said, for he was half mad with rage. But that was the fact: the cunning scoundrel had seen that he was watched, and somehow or another had contrived the disguise below.

"And I helped them off," growled my companion, after the fact was plain beyond controverting. "Come on ashore! They won't go by the mail, and we may find them in the town. Come on!"

"All right!" I said, taking up my bag from the seat, and thrusting my hand in my pocket for the key as I saw a Custom House officer approach. "I shan't be a minute satisfying his lordship here, and—hang the key!"

"Anything to declare, Sir? This way?"

"Yes," I cried excitedly; "this is not my bag."

"What!"

It was my companion who shouted this, as he pounced upon the bag like a wild beast, and tore it from my hands.

"But my bag?" I cried.

"What 's it worth?" he shouted. "A hundred?—two hundred? What you like! Saved!—saved!" he cried frantically.

And it was true.

I had helped the culprits to escape, but I had given them my brown bag instead of theirs; and in the confusion and hurry to escape they had not noticed the exchange. How they got on with the Custom House officers I don't know. Excused, perhaps, because they were so ill.

For my companion was right. He had tracked the right people, and, better still, found the securities intact.

"And the swindler and thief?" I asked him later on.

"Don't know," he said. "I saved forty thousand pounds, and that has satisfied me."

"And your partners?"

"Are going to join me, Sir, in making you a handsome present. What would you like it to be?"

A DAUGHTER OF THE PEOPLE.

BY JOHN LATEY, JUN.,

Author of "Love Clouds," "The River of Life," &c.

CHAPTER FIRST.

The House by the River.

A BEAUTIFUL sunset glorifies the river Thames this mellow autumn evening as fair-haired Mercy Grey, her sweet forget-me-not blue eyes sparkling with pleasure, looks westward at the crimson-flecked sky from the little bow window above the tideway, and murmurs her delight at the sight to her middle-aged foster-mother, Mrs. Bennett.

Mercy's pretty oval face glows as sunnily as the glowing river, for the slender, *svelte* young Sister of Mercy has just come home from a restful holiday at the seaside, her cheeks ruddy with good health, a deeper light shining in her candid eyes, the most bewitching of smiles parting her kissable lips and disclosing two dazzling white rows of pearls, when her companion bestows upon her a glance of affectionate admiration.

"Don't mistake *me* for the sun!" laughingly protests Mercy Grey, as Mrs. Bennett presses her soft hand and puts her admiration into words.

"No, darling, for you're my dear *daughter*!"

"Fie! Fancy a staid schoolmistress like you descending to a pun! Ah! mother—my more than mother [Mercy sends one of her swift, penetrating looks straight into the grey depths of her friend's shrewd bright eyes]—how can I ever repay you the loving-kindness you have showered on me from the moment you so generously adopted me, as an infant? What should I have been—an orphan, and quite alone in London—without your tender care, mother dear? 'Tis thinking of the world of gratitude I owe you that fills my heart with sweet content this bright evening. How calm and lovely looks the light-blue sky yonder, above the crimson cloudlets—calm as my life has been, all through *you*!"

The couple make a winsome picture, aptly framed by the brown Virginian creeper that climbs round the bow window, the sill of which is gay with pink and vermilion geraniums, white and yellow marguerites. Such a sunset as that which fills them with happiness is the glory of London. It gilds each street. It brightens the quaint, old-fashioned bow window they are sitting in, under the shadow of St. Paul's. It illuminates the murky Thames, on whose flood-tide the brown-sailed lighters glide sunwards, it poetises the throbbing steam-boats, and even gives beauty to the darksome Bankside wharves and coal-barges opposite.

This curious riverside dwelling above a wharf by St. Paul's Pier is dear to the memory of many a London girl besides Mercy Grey. A nurse at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Mercy, indescribably neat in her well-fitting dark-blue merino dress, spotless white apron and bib, and white cambric cap with natty bow under her dimpled chin, enjoys the advantage of being Mrs. Bennett's favourite. But the room above, with the wide balcony, is the sitting-room of a number of other honest girl-workers to whom this benevolent hostess (her comely Irish face usually beaming) offers cheap and cheerful board, lodging, and recreation—a quick-fingered type-writer, a young School Board teacher, a brisk restaurant waitress or two, a female postal clerk, and a shorthand-writer, among others, one and all thoroughly devoted to their sympathetic friend and protectress, the kind-hearted Southwark School Board mistress whose name is similarly honoured in the squalid courts and alleys of "the Mint."

Yet even this good soul finds she has momentary cause for sighing, as the sun finally sinks behind a dense bank of clouds, and the glory of the sunset vanishes from the river and the heavens.

"Mercy," she says, knitting her brows with anxiety, and rising to attend to some household duties, "I do wish this sad Dock Strike would end, and Will's and Richard's troublesome task was finished. I don't wish to trouble you, Mercy, about my anxiety, but sometimes I fear the rough words that fall from my son and nephew may bring us sorrow—I say *us*, because I know Will and Rich are as brothers to you, dear!"

"The kindest—of brothers," comes the answer, in Mercy's sweet, soft voice, which at once has a soothing effect on Mrs. Bennett, whose mind is further relieved, as she is about to quit the room, by Mercy's hopeful remark, "But have no fear, mother! Will and Rich are prudent as they are brave."

Some new strain of thought clearly occurs to the fair young nurse, whose sunny curls gleam like a halo above her intelligent brow; for she quietly leaves her nook by the window, and, sitting by the cottage piano, draws sweetest music from it as she accompanies herself with

For the moment she can hardly think it is a reality—the transformation of the modest little nurse of St. Bartholomew's into the well-loved daughter of the Diamond King. Radiant in her snow-white Drawingroom dress, Mercy Grey pauses a moment, ascends a few steps, and sends a wistful look up at her good-natured foster-mother, sight of whose beaming, happy face proudly regarding her assures her that her fairy story is true.

"A DAUGHTER OF THE PEOPLE."

tenderest expression in her soft, low, honeyed voice to a favourite song of hers, Molloy's "Love's Old Sweet Song":

> Just a song at twilight, when the lights are low,
> And the flickering shadows softly come and go.
> Though the heart be weary, sad the day and long,
> Still to us at twilight comes Love's old song,
> Comes Love's old sweet song!

The dulcet refrain thrills to the core black-bearded Will Bennett, the thick-set son of the School Board mistress, as he noiselessly opens the door, removing his hat as though he were entering on hallowed ground, and casting a look of infinite love at the fair singer, whose sunny hair gleams in the dusk.

"Mercy!"

"Will!" is the surprised response of the little nurse, as, struck by the unwonted tenderness in his tone, she turns on the music-stool and looks up at him with her frank blue eyes.

"Ah, Mercy!"—the words escape him in an earnest whisper, as he steps forward and eagerly grips her soft white hand—"your dear song struck the keynote that has beaten in my heart for many a long day. My mind has been at such a tension all day at the dock gates [he winces, but is not to be hindered by her firm though gentle withdrawal of the dear hand he would retain] that I feel I must perforce speak out to you. Mercy, I love you with all my heart and soul. Tell me—do, dearest!—that I may one day hope you will return my love!"

The rich colour leaves Mercy's pretty face. Unwilling to wound him by a single word, she turns from him with a gesture which only too plainly tells him his fate.

"You cannot love me, Mercy?"

"Only as a brother—a dear, kind brother, Will!" is the tremulous answer.

"Then you love another—you love Richard! I know now the meaning of the sheep's-eye glances you send him. But you love him in vain, Mercy. Co-leader with me in this dockers' strike"—here he knits his bushy black eyebrows till they seem to meet, and the veins stand out angrily on his forehead—"Dick Tillman—Cousin Dick—is engrossed in his work, and"——

"Will, you forget yourself—forget for a moment your good heart. I know you don't mean to be unkind. But you had no right to say what you did about Richard. You know from a child I have looked on you both as the devoted brothers you have been to me. Do, do, Will, if I am still to regard this dear old home as mine, continue to look upon me as your sister. Be true to your manhood, Will, and throw your talents still into the cause you have unselfishly taken up!"

Mercy's soft beseeching appeal calms the stricken man. The sweet, sweet accents that ever charm all who hear them restore his better nature. Her low voice acts as an

By instinct ever seeking, though without effort, to increase the happiness of all around her, Mercy Grey was in her element when the sacred spirit of Christmas-time called her to the cots of the children, by whose side she rejoiced their eyes with an array of "Truth" toys, cheered their little hearts with a sweet carol, or filled their imaginations with entrancing fairy stories, and so made the wee ones momentarily forget their pain.

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anodyne. The glad smile that brightens her well-loved face as she notices the welcome change in him nerves him to complete his self-conquest. The sturdy engineer, whose ringing voice has stirred strong men to enthusiasm, by a mighty effort crushes down his jealousy—his love he cannot smother in a moment—and in a hoarse, broken whisper which eloquently tells what the heroic effort has cost him, says, with trembling lips:—

"You are right, Mercy—as you always are, my dear—sister. Depend upon it, I'll fulfil my duty. I'll work hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, with Dick to the last!"

"Shoulder to shoulder! Why, of course, Will!" comes cheerily from a tall, muscular new-comer, a brown-bearded sailor-like-looking young man in a pilot-jacket, with a thoughtful brow, his large hazel eyes glowing with a laughing light as he warmly shakes hands first with Mercy (whose eyelids droop to hide the kindling light within), and then with Will Bennett, who couldn't suppress a heart-pang when his keen vision caught sight of the love-light that, as Dick entered, instantly sprang up in the sweet blue eyes of the girl he is now forbidden to love.

"There never was a truer mate than Cousin Will, Mercy," continues Richard Tillman. "You'll rejoice with us to know the poor dockers will win the day yet, Mercy. Since Will left the committee-room this afternoon—see, the good news is in the *Star*, our backer through thick and thin—we have had splendid proof that our kith and kin beyond the seas heartily sympathise with our cause. Australia has wired home the magnificent gift of a Thousand Pounds to our Relief Fund"——

"Bravo!" from Will.

"Ah, Mercy! Will and I are well-nigh hoarse with speech-making — speech-shouting, I should say. But, thank goodness! our stout-hearted dockers remain firm. Labour will win in a canter, now Australia 's come to our aid!—now our gentle Sister of Mercy here is coming to help the poor women in the morning!"

Does the wistful glance Richard shoots into the uplifted forget-me-not eyes of Mercy Grey betoken that Victory once won, he will look for his crowning reward from her sweet lips? A faint, faint blush steals into her charming face, but her eyelids (mercifully for Will) droop again, concealing the love-light that suffuses her tender blue eyes.

CHAPTER SECOND.

On Tower Hill.

THE MISERY of the London Poor—who can fathom it in ordinary times of toil for a beggarly pittance? But when a great strike like this of the London dockers and wharf-labourers keeps thousands upon thousands of bread-winners idle, the grey-hued faces of their hungry women-folk grow more haggard, their squalid clothing scantier, their cupboards emptier, their lives become immeasurably sorrowful, the little ones wanner than ever. Within an ace of starvation, their sad lot is now hardest of all.

There is a hopeful Star in the East, however. Merciful Charity, happily for England's Christianity, is prompt to mitigate the distress.

Behold on Tower Hill, this bright autumnal morning, as the army of dockers, with banners borne staunchly aloft, the emblazoned silk flashing in the sunlight, stream down in a seemingly endless procession of rough, stern-looking men, led by black-bearded Will Bennett and sailor-like Richard Tillman—behold Mercy Grey, in her black nurse's cloak and neat black-straw bonnet, a veritable Sister of Mercy, with buxom Mistress Bennett, and other willing helpers, at Pearce's Coffee-wagon, busily distributing rolls and cups of hot coffee and tea to a host of famished women and children. Mercy's gentle voice and angel-smile comfort their sore hearts; and Mrs. Bennett's lively Irish briskness raises the drooping spirits of her impoverished sisters. The tall, slim founder of the feast—the kind-hearted soul whose motto is "Pearce and Plenty"—smiles with glad satisfaction, and encourages Mercy and Mrs. Bennett with his cheery thanks.

As this bountiful meal is being freely given on Tower Hill, zealous ministers of the Church of England are similarly doing the Master's work at Poplar, and the "Slum Sisters" of the Salvation Army are at the same moment vieing with them in alleviating the hunger of the dockers' wives and families in their savoury East-End soup kitchen, and Catholic Sisters in sable cloaks and large white linen bonnets are sharing in the good work.

The bursts of cheers from the crowd of unkempt dockers grouped near the Tower railings meantime show that the vigorous oratory of their trusty leaders is having its effect. The homely arguments of strong-lunged Will Bennett, the earnest eloquence of Richard Tillman, perched on the low wall, stimulate the eager listeners to persevere with their demand for a wage of sixpence an hour. The Army of Labour has found its voice in these inflexible champions.

The outspoken address of Richard Tillman, who puts his heart into each strong word he utters, rouses their enthusiasm, sustains their confidence in the justice of their claim. They cheer and cheer again when he foretells that their triumph is nigh—that, with the powerful aid of a liberal Lord Mayor and of the venerable Archbishop Manning, their success cannot be long delayed. "The sixpence per hour we ask for will soon be yours, brother workmen. Meanwhile, I rejoice to be able to tell you that thousands of pounds are coming to you for food from Australia." [What a shout of gratitude fills the air; how their eyes glisten and grow dim as this news touches them to the core!]

There is a stir near the railings as Richard Tillman concludes. A middle-aged man with a fringe of grey beard beneath his chin leaps up by the side of Richard, and begs a hearing as a fellow working-man who would offer his sympathy and counsel.

"I promise you, I'll speak to the point, friends," he begins in a clear penetrating voice as of one accustomed to command men. "Your plucky young leader here has told you of Australia's handsome gift. Believe me, you have the sympathies of Englishmen all the world over. I can speak for South Africa, where I've come from. I left London about five-and-twenty years ago, a poor man—ay, poor as any one of you. I return with a fortune. And, in token of that, mates, I offer your Relief Committee a gift of another Thousand Pounds. (Loud cheers.) I've gilded the pill, so you needn't make a wry face in swallowing it. Well, my advice, fellow working-men, is—keep staunch to your manful combination. Union is strength. But remember at the same time the interests of Capital and Labour are really the same. Don't drive away the trade of London! Don't cut off your nose to spite your face! Shall I tell you what I did when I rose to be a master out in South Africa? Why, I formed a Council of Fairplay to settle all differences amicably—myself and foreman to represent Capital, and two workmen delegates to represent the Men. As I prospered so they prospered in due proportion. In short, 'Live and Let Live' is my motto, friends!"

Warmly is the grey-bearded stranger's hand grasped by the delighted leaders of the dockers; and a forest of hands rises from the cheering multitude to grip their unknown benefactor.

A broad-shouldered man of athletic frame, he yet finds it difficult to force his way through the dense mass of dockers. Richard Tillman and Will Bennett—fraternally united now as if no jealous cloud had obscured Will's vision for the moment—spring down to form a lane for his safe conduct. They ultimately gain the fringe of the vast concourse; and Richard hands their treasurer's address to the open-handed philanthropist. Promising to take his cheque on at once in person, he is about to step into a hansom cab, when the horse rears (frightened by the tumultuous populace), and the poor man falls to the ground. The horse makes a dash forward, and the stranger's head would have been crushed by the wheel had not the strong hands of Richard Tillman and Will Bennett tugged at the spokes, and arrested the progress of the cab—not, however, before the recumbent man is stunned by the concussion.

A shriek from Mrs. Bennett, an eyewitness of the accident, calls Mercy Grey to her side. Woman of action, aghast though she is at the sight of the blood trickling down the neck of the unconscious man held in Richard's arms, Mercy, with the instinct of a skilled nurse, deftly staunches the wound with her handkerchief, and plucks off her cloak and binds it round the pallid sufferer's head; and then begs Will to call a four-wheeled cab to bear him to St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

CHAPTER THIRD.

Sister Mercy.

IS in the bright, clean ward of one of London's noblest institutions that the stricken stranger first opens his eyes after his grave accident — in the Abernethy Ward of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the true heart of the City; for here are the sick and suffering nursed with loving care by a band of zealous doctors, students, and of trained gentlewomen, who bravely and devotedly follow the heroic profession of Florence Nightingale.

Tender-eyed Sister Mercy Grey, as Head Nurse, with infinite patience has tended his wound, and striven to restore him to consciousness. It needed not the newspaper announcement of his munificent donation to induce the chief surgeon to exert all his skilll to fan the flickering spark of life. All that Science can do—all that the most assiduous nursing can do—are at the command of the Poorest and Richest alike at St. Bartholomew's. The expertest surgical treatment might have been in vain, however, had not Sister Mercy watched with ceaseless vigilance day and night by his side, and with her own soft hands gently replaced the assuaging bandages, and administered the medicines.

Sister Mercy cannot tell herself what strange feeling draws her more and more to the frosty-haired stranger with the pale rugged face, and compels her involuntarily to watch and attend him with even more than her wonted care.

The daylight streaming in through the windows makes the golden curls of Mercy Grey, visible round her snowy cap, shine like an aureole, and radiantly illuminates her pretty little oval face till she looks like a veritable saint as she noiselessly glides from the bed of one patient to another, alleviating the pain of one grateful sufferer with a gentle touch of a soft hand through which her heart's blood ever pulses warmly with kindly sympathy; comforting yon ashen-faced youth with a sweet, low word, or cooing whisper that fills his heart with living hope; bringing a faint smile to the wee mouth of a little lad, whom she thoughtfully cheers with a *Truth* toy, relic from the previous Christmas distribution; yet looking back ever and anon to the bed where, beneath the pink-and-white coverlet, reposes the silent man who has an apparently magnetic attraction for her, though she cannot imagine why.

Truly, an ideal Sister of Mercy, one whose very presence is a source of solace and joy, and whose soft musical voice of rarest sweetness should alone be enough to charm a man back to life. Fitting complement to this slender, graceful little Nurse are the paintings on the walls and the beautiful flowers and ferns that enliven the ward.

Mercy Grey is the idol of St. Bartholomew's. Silver-haired Doctors, the comely Matron, the young medical students, her sister Nurses and the ward-maids, and patients, one and all acknowledge the spell of her unconscious fascination, her gentle nature, her pure spirit, her keen intelligence, and sympathetic mind.

At Sunday service, in the curiously small hospital Church of St. Bartholomew the Less, within the hospital gates, much as the earnest prayers and apt sermons of the earnest young Minister may influence his listeners for good, who could deny that the mellow music of Mercy's soft contralto voice, as she led the singing, mingling with the clear notes of the choir-boys and solemn tone of the organ, had its sanctifying effect? By instinct ever seeking, though without effort, to increase the happiness of all around her, Mercy Grey was in her element when the sacred spirit of Christmas time called her to the cots of the children, by whose side she rejoiced their eyes with an array of *Truth* toys, cheered their little hearts with a sweet carol, or filled their imaginations with entrancing fairy stories, and so made the wee ones momentarily forget their pain.

There is a shady oasis in the quadrangle of St. Bartholomew's—a tree-studded garden, where on one of the warm sunny mornings of a beautiful autumn Mr. Grey first breathes the fresh air after his disaster. Stretched on a couch near the central fountain, a faint smile of grateful pleasure lights up his worn face as he takes in the refreshing scene: the green leaves yet on the over-arching branches, the groups of medical students taking the air bareheaded, here and there a couple of neat ward-maids in lavender print dresses crossing the garden, by his side the fair young Sister who has done her utmost to nurse him back to consciousness. He has clear blue eyes, which closely resemble the forget-me-not hue of Sister Mercy's; and they grow more and more wistful as he eagerly gazes at her sweet face.

"My dear," he faintly says at length in a tone that stirs Mercy's heart strangely, "your pretty face recalls one I dearly loved many, many years ago—my poor dear wife. But"—he pauses for breath, and to recover from his emotion—"but she died childless—died, my dear, when I was at the Cape, labouring for bread. You see, I was forced to emigrate. Couldn't get work, try as I would—no, not even the poor pay of a docker. I felt I couldn't be a burden on my darling wife. I left England a heart-broken man, promising myself to send back the first money I earned abroad to help her. But months passed by without my getting more than my own daily bread. Her letters stopped. At last—a year had gone—I chanced to read in *Lloyd's News*, lent me by a mate, of a terrible fire at the East-End—a fire that caused the death of my dear wife, for she expired in this very hospital from the injuries she received"——

"Her name?" tearfully, anxiously asks Mercy Grey.

"Lizzie Grey!"

"My mother!" is the exclamation wrung from the grief-stricken girl, as she sinks on her knees by his side, and clasps his trembling hands. "Oh, father, thank Heaven I have found you! Dear mother must smile upon us from above!"

A silence more eloquent than words ensues when the lips of father and daughter have met for the first time in one long kiss. The marvellous meeting soon makes the tide of life course more strongly through his veins, sends a faint tinge of colour into his haggard cheeks. His blue eyes are moist as he gently strokes her sunny curls, and sees her mother's well-remembered look in the searching gaze of her sweet forget-me-not eyes; and he feels a new interest, a new joy in life, as Mercy's soft voice murmurs in his ear her own simple story—of how kind-hearted Mrs. Bennett, the Southwark Schoolmistress, had cared for her in her crèche before her mother's death, and had then adopted her, and educated her until she was qualified to be a teacher herself; of how she felt irresistibly drawn, however, to the hospital where her mother breathed her last, serving there first as a ward-maid, and then, by the generous aid of her

(Continued on page 22.)

"Gentle, loving, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood."

A SWEET CHRISTMAS ROSE.

JACK'S WIFE: A PRAYER FOR HIS SAFE RETURN.

See Poem, page 22

A CHEERFUL OLD SOUL.

IT is possible for a woman with increasing years to continue to do laundry work. Thousands who would have been laid aside under the old system of washing have proved what Sunlight Soap can do in reducing labour. The cleansing properties of Sunlight Soap save years of arduous toil. Reader, prove Sunlight Soap for yourself: by giving the best article a trial you will do yourself a real service.

BEWARE!! DO NOT ALLOW other Soaps, said to be the same as the "Sunlight Soap," to be palmed off upon you. If you do, you must expect to be disappointed. See that you get what you ask for, and that the word "Sunlight" is stamped upon every tablet, and printed upon every wrapper.

benefactress, enrolled as a probationary nurse, from which stage she had risen to be Sister of her ward.

"And here comes Mrs. Bennett—my second mother," says Mercy Grey, a flush springing to her cheeks as she observes Richard Tillman walking towards them with Mrs. Bennett, to whom and to Richard she is presently whispering the glad tidings of her marvellous discovery.

The gladdened father's thanks poured out in tremulous accents to the guardian of his child and to him who had acted as her foster-brother, Mercy is led by Richard to another part of the garden, while Mrs. Bennett takes the little nurse's seat beside Mr. Grey.

Love's instinct is generally true. Overwhelming as the morning's revelation has been to Mercy, she yet divines there is something in Richard's manner and bearing towards her that she has never noticed before. Can it be that the affection she has long secretly entertained for him is at length reciprocated?

Love speaks by the glance of the eye, by the touch of a hand, as surely as—often more clearly than—by the spoken word. It is through these signs that Mercy swiftly reads the welcome love Richard has come to confide to her.

Elated by the triumph of his crusade on behalf of the dockers, his work accomplished, victory achieved, Richard Tillman, in the unwonted luxury of a restful hour, had suddenly borne in upon him that the sunniest moments of his existence had been those he had spent in the sweet company of Mercy under the roof of the old riverside house, that the loveliest eyes of all womankind were Mercy's forget-me-not e'en, that the softest music in all the world was her gentle voice—that, in a word, Mercy had grown into his heart, and won his soul. Love's electricity tells his tale to Mercy—who averts her face to hide the tell-tale blush of pleasure—long before his broken, ardent sentences convey the avowal. Overjoyed when Mercy timidly whispers that she returns his love, Richard Tillman—the hospital garden being too public a place for the first precious kiss of plighted love—can for the moment only express his gratitude by a long-lingering clasp of the slender hand that warmly, lovingly responds to the pressure.

"And now, dearest Mercy," breaks in Mr. Grey, as the couple return to his couch, "let me finish my life-story in the hearing of your good friends, whose kindness to my little darling I feel I can never repay—though I shall try with all my heart to do so, Mrs. Bennett, believe me. [And, for the moment, it seemed that something more than gratitude might be developed in his breast for the genial Irishwoman]. You need never work more, my darling child—neither you nor your faithful friends here. You are a wealthy heiress—ay, one of the wealthiest in England. When the one tie which alone—as I *then* thought, Mercy—bound me to my native land was so sadly broken—when I heard of your dear mother's death, I gave up all my mind, all my strength, to making money in South Africa. Chance favoured me in El Dorado—in that beautiful climate. You see I was one of the earliest to hit upon diamonds. I kept the secret; bought the diamond land; employed—and fairly paid, Master Richard—diamond labourers by the hundred; and riches poured into my lap. I was called the Diamond King. The more I got, the harder I worked—till I returned to the old country—I, a poor man driven from England, home, and wife by sheer poverty—worth Millions of money. Thank God I have providentially found my dear daughter—and her second mother here! The discovery has given me a new lease of life. But Mercy [a shrewd light twinkles in his light-blue eyes as he notes the fond glances Richard bestows upon his sunny-haired sweetheart], is there someone nearer and dearer still to you?"

"Yes, father," Mercy answers, darting a beseeching look into his eyes; "and I think you'll grow to love Richard as fondly as I do when you come to know his noble nature. I have just given him my heart, which he could have had long ago [this with a shy glance at her lover] for the asking."

"Ay, Mercy," is the hearty response of Mr. Grey, clasping the hands of the young people; "you've chosen the right man. I liked the honest ring of his voice when I heard him speak on Tower Hill. By the way, I must give you the promised £1000 cheque, Richard, now I'm getting well again—thanks to the gentle nursing of my true Sister of Mercy. Take my heart's treasure, lad, and give her all the love she deserves, my bonnie blue-eyed Mercy!"

CHAPTER FOURTH.

The Diamond King's Fairy Palace.

One of Nature's Gentlewomen, Heaven's best gift to man, Mercy Grey seems as if to the palace born even in the splendid mansion Mr. Grey has caused to spring up, as if by enchantment, on Highgate Hill.

Glance at sunny Mercy as she stands before her mirror this balmy spring morning in her bijou bedroom overlooking a beautifully wooded park!—a room worthy this little Princess with the sparkling blue eyes and the soft musical voice! A grey satin canopy surmounts her bed, and an electric lamp shines like a star on the snowy pillow. Footsteps fall noiselessly on the thick carpet. Numerous photographs of sister nurses and countless dainty nicknacks decorate Mercy's shrine.

"You look the sweetest of débutantes, Mercy!" exclaims Mrs. Bennett, with genuine admiration, her willing lady's-maid for the nonce. "I'm sure no one will look so pretty at the Queen's Drawingroom to-day. If Richard could only see now! In this beautiful white dress, Mercy, you might be a bride—the loveliest bride a bridegroom ever won!"

"You'll make me quite vain, mother, if you go on in this way," is the smiling response of Mercy Grey, glancing not disapprovingly, however, at her sweet face in the glass. "Richard will be here, you know, by the time Lady Bountiful brings me back from Buckingham Palace. I wonder how I shall go through the ordeal of presentation to the Queen and Princess?"

"As gracefully as any lady of the land, I'm sure, my dear. Do you know, I can scarcely believe it is true—this transplanting of poor you and me from our old house by the river to this palace! What a noble man your father is! He is as simple and natural now as I should think he was as a penniless workman. And how generous! I can never be sufficiently grateful to him for giving my son Will the fine post of head engineer at the Diamond Fields, nor for making me matron for life of this regal house. And the papers are full of his grand gift of this magnificent Fairy Palace and Park for the public use for ever. Why, it's worthy of a King—yes, he is rightly called the 'Diamond King'! Ah, there's Lady Bountiful's carriage driving up to the door for you. Let me arrange your train, dear. There! you're perfect now!"

It is with queenly dignity and self-possession that Mercy Grey passes through her pretty dressing-room into the grand corridor, illuminated on one side with stained-glass windows, and decorated on the other side with chaste pictured tapestry. She descends the staircase as if in a dream. For the moment, she too can hardly think it is a reality—the transformation of the modest little nurse of St. Bartholomew's into the well-loved daughter of the Diamond King. Radiant in her snow-white Drawing room dress, Mercy Grey pauses a moment, ascends a few steps, and sends a wistful look up at her good-natured foster-mother, sight of whose beaming, happy face proudly regarding her assures her that her fairy story is true.

It is the evening of the Royal Drawingroom day. The Fairy Palace on Highgate Hill gleams with a myriad electric lamps as the Diamond King, quite restored to health now, in his usual simple, unaffected style conducts his daughter's chaperon, Lady Bountiful, herself renowned for countless deeds of charity, over the mansion which he has determined to present to the public as a thanks-offering for the providential finding of his daughter. Mercy, peerless in her Court dress, her forget-me-not eyes filled with joy as they look into the brown depths of her ardent lover's, follows with gladsome Richard Tillman and motherly Mrs. Bennett. Their way is through the chastely lit marble Sculpture Gallery, lined with treasures of white statuary, to the spacious and nobly proportioned Picture Gallery, remarkable for its marble pillars, for the soft beauty of the paintings by Murillo, for the bold dash of the Velasquez figures, and the charming colouring of the Gainsboroughs and Raeburns, the pure English landscapes of Linnell and Vicat Cole, and the delicate portraiture of Millais.

"My idea in giving this place to London, your Ladyship, was this," says Mr. Grey. "That thousands of poor workers should, on Sundays as well as week-days, be able to come here, and find rest and healthy recreation, and, by looking at these pictures, and by strolling out over the terrace and lawn and about the gardens and round the lake, get some colour into their lives. Those who like rare plants can ramble among the ferns and palms in yonder Winter Garden. If it comes on to rain, a first-class band shall play every evening in this Picture Gallery. When it's dry, the people shall have music outside. The public can't have too much good music. Music is a great humaniser. What we want is more harmony in London life. And I mean to do what I can to promote it. I mean to turn the drawing-room, dining-room, billiard-room, and sitting-rooms on the ground-floor into reading-rooms and refreshment-rooms. The upstairs rooms, I stipulate, shall be placed at the disposal of a good matron, Mrs. Bennett (though I may whisper to your Ladyship that I one day hope to persuade that lady to be my wife), and of any of Mercy's sister-nurses at St. Bartholomew's who need a rest and a holiday. Then, in the summer, visitors shall be amused with open-air plays—'As You Like It,' and what not—in the grassy theatre I've had contrived. 'Dost like the picture?' as they say in the play, your Ladyship?"

"A noble gift, nobly planned!" murmurs Lady Bountiful, as they pause to look over the verdant, far-reaching grounds, from the grassy slope of which the great world of London looks almost at the feet of the Fairy Palace. "And I can tell you the highest lady in the land thanks you warmly for your grand present to the people. I heard her Majesty bid Mercy tell you how deeply she appreciated and valued your noble gift, Mr. Grey."

"Did she, now? Well, I'm right glad to receive her kind message—though I hardly deserve it. 'Tis a selfish gift, after all. For, you see, my greatest happiness consists in promoting the happiness of all around me—including you loving couple."

Mercy's quick ears catch her father's fond words, and her sweet blue forget-me-not eyes flash her loving gratitude towards the Diamond King, and then glance shyly at the proudly happy lover by her side, for the sunny-haired girl has chanced, by Love's instinct, to fall into the same train of thought as fills the heart of Richard Tillman with bliss too great for words: the evening music of the birds in their leafy orchestra seems to herald for both the merry peal of the marriage bells soon to ring out gladsomely in honour of their wedding.

FOR HIM AT SEA.

In silence, with a heart that aches,
As no heart save a mother's can,
She asks her hardest, for their sakes,
Those little ones and her good man.
Though lost in plaints of trembling trust
She hears their prattle as they play;
And, oh! in every screaming gust,
She hears the peril of the bay!

Poor sailor's wife! Her fears come home,
And memories bring to you and me:
We've seen the wild waves tower and foam,
And prayed our best for *ours* at sea.
If ever prayers went straight, they speed
Right up to Heaven at times like this,
And succour bring to sorest need,
And calm as from an angel's kiss!

The children play on while she kneels;
The snow has ceased; the wind seems still'd;
The angels' kisses warm she feels
Deep in the heart that fear had chill'd.
She rises from her knees and peers
In search of one familiar star—
'Tis there! And now she almost hears
His voice beyond the harbour bar.

Glad tears her sweet eyes brighten, while
She stoops to clasp in hungry arms
Those babes, whose every word and smile
Had sharpened all her vague alarms.
She has been answered. Let them sail
Their toy-ships, and, God bless their glee!
The wind blows now a prospering gale
To help the homeward-bound at sea.

Who knows? To-morrow's sun may bring
The good man to his waiting door
In time to hear his schoolmates sing
The anthem often heard before.
In time to listen while he tells
Of Christmas Eves spent far away,
And how he longed to hear the bells
Sound solemnly o'er Belgrave Bay.

Make beautiful their fond fireside,
Kind Christmas, with all blessings rare!
Bring hither, with the morning tide,
The good man to his vacant chair.
And realise the children's dreams
Of father's wondrous Christmas-tree,
While prayerfully, 'neath starlight gleams,
She walks the watch with him at sea.

BYRON WEBBER.

WEIR MUSIC.

Spring.

The water made music over the weir,
As She wandered across the meadows;
The pulse of the Spring beat far and near:
There was joy in the sun and the shadows.
As fair as the heavens above was she,
With a beauty as pure as her purity—
And the water made music over the weir.

Summer.

The water came thundering over the weir,
The loose-strife was bent by the zephyr.
To her river haunt a skiff must steer,
With a lover whose love was "for ever"—
A Knight of Romance, her heart to win.
He won, did that lover, nor held it sin,
Nor reeked of the time when the leaves are sere—
While the water came thundering over the weir.

Autumn.

The water went moaning over the weir;
The rustling leaves to the dank earth hurried;
She gazed on the stream as tear by tear
Fell for the hopes all dead and buried.
She had learned the lesson of love; and he
Had left her alone in her misery;
Had left her alone with a ghastly fear—
As the water went moaning over the weir.

Winter.

The water was frozen over the weir—
The pale moon shone on a dead face brightly;
The pure-white snow was for pall and bier,
For Nature herself had disposed her sightly.
She had given her life, with its misery,
For the sake of a life that was not to be.
Monte Carlo *he* visits at this time of year—
And the water is frozen over the weir.

WILLIAM MACKAY.

THE RIGHT STUFF FOR AN EDITOR.

"What do you intend to do with your boy, Tom?"

"I'll try to make him editor of a daily newspaper."

"Good! Has he shown any literary taste?"

"No; but I've never known him to be satisfied with anything in his life!"

CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP AND FOOD WARMER.

INVALUABLE FOR INVALIDS AND INFANTS. NO HOUSEHOLD SHOULD BE WITHOUT ONE.

CLARKE'S
NEWLY DESIGNED
"PYRAMID"
NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.
With New Registered Pannikin.

2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., 5s., and 6s. each.

A BLESSING—TO MOTHERS.
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.

A BLESSING—TO INFANTS.
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A BLESSING—TO INVALIDS.
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A BLESSING—A CUP OF HOT TEA,
Any Hour in the Night.
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.

A BLESSING—A CUP OF HOT COFFEE
Any Hour in the Night.
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.

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Any Hour in the Night.
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.

A BLESSING—A CUP OF HOT SOUP,
GRUEL, or MILK Any Hour in the Night.
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.

The Patentee, in reply to numerous consumers, begs to state that he will only warrant his Patent "PYRAMID" FOOD WARMERS to answer the purpose for which they are recommended when the "Pyramid" Night Lights are burned in them; the common night lights will not give sufficient heat. The "Pyramid" Food Warmers are sold by all respectable dealers throughout the Kingdom, the United States of America, and Colonies.

CLARKE'S IMPROVED PANNIKIN (REGISTERED)
FOR USE WITH
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP.

By this invention any liquid food can be poured out or drunk without scum or grease passing through the spout, and prevents spilling when poured into a Feeding Bottle, so objectionable with all other Pannikins.

These Pannikins will fit all the old "Pyramid" Nursery Lamps, and can be purchased separately.

N.B.—Ask for CLARKE'S PANNIKIN, and see that his name and the registered number (Registered 91,241) is on the Pannikin, and Trade Mark, "Pyramid."

Clarke's Patent "PYRAMID" or "FAIRY-PYRAMID" NIGHT LIGHTS are the only Lights suitable for these Lamps.

CAUTION.—TO PREVENT BURGLARIES.

A "Pyramid" Night Light should be lighted in the front and back of every house as soon as it is dark. Housebreakers have the greatest dread of a light. The Police recommend a "Pyramid" Night Light as the best safeguard. Almost all the burglaries perpetrated might have been prevented, and much VALUABLE PROPERTY SAVED, if this simple and inexpensive plan had always been adopted. The "Pyramid" Night Lights are much larger and give DOUBLE THE LIGHT of the common night lights, and are therefore particularly adapted for this purpose. Manufactured in Patent Fire-Proof Plaster Cases. No paraffin or other dangerous material used in their manufacture.

CLARKE'S
ADJUSTABLE BED-TRAY
(Protected by Two Patents),
With Book Rest, &c.,
For use with
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID"
NURSERY LAMP FOOD WARMER.

For Reading, Clarke's Double Wick "Fairy" Lights are best. They will burn in the "Pyramid" Lamp.

Tray and Iron Bracket, **15s.** If with Brass Bracket, **4s.** extra. If with Book Rest and Medicine Box, **6s.** extra. If with Adjustable Brass Support for Book Rest, **5s.** extra.

The above is an invaluable invention, and useful appliance at the bedside, suitable for invalids, and particularly for parents whose INFANTS REQUIRE FEEDING DURING THE NIGHT. It obviates the necessity of getting out of bed, as everything required for use can be put on the Tray. The Tray is adapted for use in connection with CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" FOOD WARMER, and when not required can be turned to the wall in such a manner as to SHADE THE PERSON IN BED FROM THE RAYS OF THE LIGHT.

Invalids will find it a GREAT COMFORT, for any book, plate, basin, &c., can be placed thereon ready for use, and obtained without altering the position in bed. By means of a Slide, the Tray can be pulled forward to the position or length required. IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED BY THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, and can be obtained from most dealers in CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" AND FAIRY LAMPS, or from the Manufacturer.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST
TO PREVENT BURGLARIES.
THE POLICE RECOMMEND AS

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NIGHT LIGHTS.
IN FRONT AND BACK OF EVERY HOUSE.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST.
TO SAVE VALUABLE PROPERTY
USE CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NIGHT LIGHTS.
No paraffin or other dangerous material
Used in their manufacture.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST.
CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" LAMP, WITH ONE "PYRAMID" LIGHT, COMPLETE IN BOX, from 4d. each.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST.
Insist upon having the Lamp, with one "Pyramid" Light, complete in Box.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST.
THE CHEAPEST, SAFEST, AND MOST PERFECT NIGHT LIGHT.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST.
CLARKE'S NEW "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP, 2s. 6d. each.

FAR, FAR AND AWAY THE BEST.
CLARKE'S NEW REGISTERED NURSERY PANNIKIN. Do not have any other.

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CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" LAMPS ARE SOLD IN BOXES ONLY, with one "Pyramid" Light complete, from 4d.

LINES on BURNING one of CLARKE'S NIGHT LIGHTS:

When nights are dark
Then think of Clarke,
Who's hit the mark precisely;
For his night lights
Create light nights,
In which you see quite nicely.—W. E.

MORAL.—IF YOU WANT TO SLEEP SAFELY AND SAVE YOUR PROPERTY USE CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NIGHT LIGHTS.

CLARKE'S "FAIRY," "FAIRY-PYRAMID," AND "PYRAMID" LIGHTS.

N.B.—If any difficulty in obtaining the above Lights, write to the manufacturers, who will give the address of their nearest Agent.

CLARKE'S PATENT.

"FAIRY-PYRAMID" LIGHT.
with Double Wicks, burn **6** hours. In Boxes, containing **8** Lights and Glass, **5d.** per Box.

CLARKE'S PATENT.
THE QUEEN OF LIGHTS.

"FAIRY" LIGHT.
With Double Wicks, in Boxes containing **6** Lights and Glass, burn **10** hours each. **1s.** per Box.

CLARKE'S PATENT.

"WEE-FAIRY" LIGHT.
11 Lights and Glass in Box, burn **4** hours. **6d.** per Box. For burning in "Wee-Fairy" Lamps.

When nights are dark
Then think of Clarke,
Who's hit the mark precisely;
For his night lights
Create light nights,
In which you see quite nicely.—W. E.

CLARKE'S PATENT.

"FAIRY-PYRAMID" LIGHT.
Single Wick, burn **10** hours. These are smaller than "Fairy" Lights, consequently less expensive, and will burn in any of the "Fairy" or "Fairy-Pyramid" Lamps. **3d.** per Box.

CLARKE'S PATENT.
The Old Favourite

In Fire-proof Plaster Casing.
"PYRAMID" LIGHT.
Single Wicks, burn **9** hours each, in Boxes containing **8** Lights. **3d.** per box.

N.B.—There is no PARAFFIN or other DANGEROUS material used in the manufacture of ANY of the ABOVE LIGHTS, which are the only Lights suitable for burning in Lamps.

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WHERE ALL DESIGNS IN "FAIRY" LAMPS CAN BE SEEN. WHOLESALE ONLY. RETAIL EVERYWHERE.

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BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES, which have proved so successful in America for the CURE OF COUGHS, COLDS, HOARSENESS, BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA, CATARRH, or any irritation or soreness of the THROAT, are imported and sold in this country at 1s. 1½d. per Box. Put up in the form of a lozenge, it is the most convenient, pleasant, safe, and sure remedy for clearing and strengthening the voice in the world. Children will find them beneficial in cases of WHOOPING COUGH. No family should be without them. Some of the most eminent singers of the Royal Italian Opera pronounce them the best article for HOARSENESS ever offered to the public. Hundreds of Testimonials from some of the most respectable sources may be seen at our office. The genuine have the words "Brown's Bronchial Troches" on the Government stamp around each Box. Ask for BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES, and get no other.

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Are you broken in your rest by a sick child suffering with the pain of cutting Teeth? If so, go at once to the Chemist, and get a Bottle of **MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP.** It will give the little sufferer INSTANT RELIEF. It is perfectly harmless, and produces a Natural quiet sleep, by relieving the child from pain, and the little cherub awakes as "bright as a button."

It is very pleasant to take; it softens the gums, allays all pain, relieves wind, regulates the bowels, and is the best-known remedy for DYSENTERY and DIARRHŒA, whether arising from teething or other causes.

A single trial never yet failed to relieve the baby, and give rest to the parents.

IT IS SAID

that one fourth of the children born die under five years of age. As the teething period is the most critical time, every mother should be prepared to act as a nurse and a physician; and no mother should be without MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP, which is perfectly safe in all cases, and may be had of any Medicine Dealer in the Kingdom at 1s. 1½d. per Bottle.

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Prevents the Hair from falling off.
Restores Grey or White Hair to its ORIGINAL COLOUR.
Being delicately perfumed, it leaves no unpleasant odour.
Is NOT a dye, and, therefore, does not stain the skin, or even white linen.
Should be in every house where a HAIR RENEWER is needed.

OF ALL CHEMISTS AND HAIRDRESSERS, PRICE 3s. 6d.

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THE MEXICAN HAIR RENEWER may now be obtained in New York from the ANGLO-AMERICAN DRUG CO., 217, FULTON STREET; and all Druggists.

FLORILINE FOR THE TEETH AND BREATH.

Is the BEST LIQUID DENTIFRICE in the World.
Prevents the decay of the TEETH.
Renders the Teeth PEARLY WHITE.
Removes all traces of Tobacco smoke.
Is perfectly harmless and delicious to the Taste.
Is partly composed of Honey and extracts from sweet herbs and plants.

OF ALL CHEMISTS AND PERFUMERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

2s. 6d. per Bottle.

FLORILINE TOOTH POWDER, in glass jars. Price 1s.

A NOVEL CHRISTMAS BOX: TROUBLESOME TWINS.

THE STAGE-STRUCK PUPPY.

A TALE OF A PERFORMING DOG.

A very remarkable creature,
And his full name was Carolus Wag;
His tail was his principal feature—
A feature of which he might brag,
For it twirled and it curled so completely
It looked like a capital Q,
And mostly was bound very neatly
In ribbons of delicate blue.

Wag's talents were early suspected:
At six months, he knew how to beg;
At nine, he was fairly detected
Pretending a lameness of leg;
At twelve, if the maids were not looking,
Devoid of compunction and shame,
He 'd run off with a steak left for cooking,
And let Pussy in for the blame.

He was petted by all beyond measure,
And partook of this world's very best;
His days were devoted to pleasure,
His nights to luxurious rest.
All went well until, after due warning,
Professor Octavius Brown,
With his trained dogs, and Sanger, one morning,
On a golden car entered the town.

Sanger's booth Wag's attention attracting,
He managed to get in the ring
While the dogs and some monkeys were acting
With the barrel, the bar, and the swing.
As he gazed, he did more than admire,
Was quite stage-struck at once—silly elf!
And was seized with a burning desire
To become a performer himself.

The people, the plaudits, the dresses,
The velvet, the spangles, the lace,
The Professor's kind words and caresses,
Drew Wag day by day to this place;
Till at length, when the season was over,
And Sanger had shifted his ground,
We searched high and low—to discover
That Wag was nowhere to be found!

Months passed; we 'd a few friends regaling
One bitterly cold winter's night,
When, lo! a most terrible wailing
Gave us all a most terrible fright.
We listened: the cry was repeated,
More piteous indeed than before,
Just as if some poor creature entreated,
"In charity, open your door!"

We answered the pleader's petition.
When, lo and behold! Charley Wag,
With looks of the deepest contrition,
Bedecked in some gaudy old rag,
On his haunches upsitting, all trembling,
And with bent paws, a-bogging—poor boy!
This, this was no time for dissembling,
So we gave such a wild shout of joy

As roused half our neighbours, then bore him
Right away to a warm fireside,
Gave him hot bread and milk to restore him—
Nor vainly our measures applied.
Soon vanished the Prodigal's sadness,
He waggled his tail for a while,
Then he licked all our hands in his gladness,
And used his best efforts to smile.

JOHN GEORGE WATTS.

LOVE ON THE RAIL.

BY HOWARD PAUL.

WAS in the "Museum Mansion," over against the British Museum, where I occupy a flat, that there also resided on the first floor, in a dashing suite of rooms superbly appointed, a hardened old bachelor named Robert Gray. He was an American by birth, in the enjoyment of an income of £2000 a year, but he had lived so long in Europe that he had shed all traces of the Star Spangled Banner, did not say "I guess" or "I calculate," and would pass in society as a good-looking, well-conditioned, carefully groomed Englishman of, say, eight-and-thirty years of age. He gave jolly little dinner-parties at his flat, had a capital cook, knew numbers of bright intelligent people, was a judge of wine, women, and pictures, to say nothing of cigars, and was altogether a pleasant sort of fellow to know *intime*.

All of a sudden I heard that he had given notice to quit the Museum Mansion, and was about to enter into the bonds of holy wedlock. I could with difficulty believe the latter part of the report. He gave me the idea of being the least marrying single-blessed man I ever encountered. His intimates called him "Butterfly Bob," and he had a profusion of tingling epigrams at his fingers' ends, which he was not slow in firing off when the subject of matrimony was under discussion. You would have sworn that he would have lived and died a bachelor, though he fervently admired the fair sex, and he often said he loved them *all* too well selfishly to sacrifice himself to one particular woman.

I met him coming out of the Mansion one day, equipped for a walk in the Park.

"Hallo!" said I, "Gray, what 's this story I hear?—that you are leaving us and are about to place a wedding-ring on some fair finger?"

"It 's quite true, *mon cher*," he replied; "and if you are disposed to go for a 'constitutional,' and dine with me afterwards, I 'll tell you all about it, though it 's a very simple story."

We dined that evening tête-à-tête—a neat little repast, flanked with a bottle of Mouton Rothschild, with J. M. Mumm to follow, and this is what he told me.

* * * * *

Last March (said he) I went to Nice to witness the *bataille des fleurs* and to get away from the gloom of London and the chills of Paris, for the latter city in that month is as dismal as this much-abused Metropolis. I detest travelling by night, so took the nine-o'clock train from the Lyons station, which would land me at the Hôtel Louvre et Paix, Marseilles, at midnight. The following day, after a night's rest, I would go on to Nice, and then to Monte Carlo.

At the Lyons station there was the usual bustle, but I was fortunate enough to find a carriage with only one other occupant—an elderly Frenchman, utterly bald, with a grizzled moustache, and only a small black bag. I naturally said to myself, "He can't be going far with such an infinitesimal show of luggage. I shall soon be alone, when I can stretch out and have a nap en route."

The train was about to start, when there was a commotion at the carriage door.

"No, no!" protested a feminine voice—an English voice speaking fairly pronounced French; "I must have the sleeping-berth I ordered."

"But, Madame, they are all engaged," replied the *sous chef de gare*.

"Can't you put on another carriage?"

"Impossible; the regulation numbers are attached, and the time of departure will be up in a minute," urged the official.

"I *must* have a place, as my luggage is in the van."

"There is a place here, Madame," and he opened the door of the carriage I was in.

A little blonde head peeped into the doorway, and was in an instant withdrawn, as though the owner of the little head was startled, though at what I could not determine.

"There are two gentlemen there," she said. "Can't I have a carriage to myself?"

"No, madame! Come, the time is up. The station-master is about to give the signal."

"Will you kindly telegraph on for me to have a sleeping-berth?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" with irritation; and in the little blonde head plunged, followed, I need hardly say, by the rest of her shapely body; and after her came a shower of parcels, bags, rugs, and a tiny cage with gold bars, in which perched two Java sparrows, with dainty crimson-tipped beaks.

A shrill whistle cut the air; there were hurried shouts of *bon voyage* from the crowds on the platform. The train glided out of the station.

The bald gentleman with the bag obligingly moved opposite me, and left the new arrival to have one side of the carriage to herself. She deposited her impedimenta in the rack, spoke a caressing word to her birds, and settled herself in her seat without ever so much as glancing at her fellow-passengers. Out of the corner of my eye I could see she was unquestionably charming, with an adorable tip to her nose; and when one embarks on a long journey it is decidedly more agreeable to enjoy the companionship of a pretty woman, with a taking tip to her nose, than a bald-headed old gentleman with a black bag.

It was a cold, dreary, sad sort of day. The fair traveller drew a broad handsome rug around her form and gazed persistently out of the window. The old gentleman drew a *Figaro* out of his bag, and soon buried his nose in that vivacious sheet. As for myself, I had a copy of the last *Illustrated London News* and piles of other journals, so I lay back in my seat for a heavy, prolonged journalistic gorge. I am a hardened newspaper reader.

At a little after eleven Laroche was reached. The old gentleman folded up his *Figaro*, grasped his bag, touched his hat courteously, as is the manner of Frenchmen of all conditions, and stepped from the carriage. Just then the station-master passed the open door.

"Monsieur," demanded the lady, "you have received a telegram for a sleeping compartment, have you not?"

"Yes, Madame; but we have none here. I 'll telegraph to Lyons as soon as the train is off."

"What time are we due there?"

"Five-fifty, Madame. The train is ten minutes late"——

And before the conversation could proceed further the signal was given and we were again *en route*.

The intelligence my fair companion had just gathered did not seem to put her in the rosiest of humours. On the contrary, her brow darkened, and she pinched up her lips with such an irritated curve about her mouth as to suggest the idea that she was in a temper. I observed that her eyes were blue and brilliantly beautiful, and they seemed to emit a fire that was heightened by her mental agitation.

I felt I would like to soothe her and to say something pleasant, but when a lady, and an English lady too, is travelling unattended, one must be circumspect, for fear of presuming on her unprotected situation. I cudgelled my brain for an appropriate subject to open a conversation. I could not say anything about so *banal* a subject as the weather. I could see there was the indefinable air of the woman of the world about her, and if I had risked a remark on the weather the chances are she would have said to herself, "What a commonplace person!"—or perhaps she would have summed me up as a commercial traveller, who is said to be always actively on the *qui vive* for adventures. While these thoughts were passing through my brain the train pulled up suddenly at Tonnerre.

A voice shouted, "Twenty-five minutes for refreshment!"

The blonde arose, glanced to see if her sparrows were comfortable, descended from the carriage, and trotted off to the buffet. I followed her, and had ample opportunity to admire the elegance of her figure, and to note the distinction of her carriage. Her feet, too, were small, and she was *bien chaussée*.

Instead of joining the passengers at the usual long table, my fellow-traveller consumed a plate of soup at a side-table by herself. I bolted through the usual railway-buffet menu, and lit a cigarette to use up the twenty-five minutes that had nearly expired. A bell sounded, the passengers hurried back to their carriages, I did the same, but my fair companion did not appear. The porter shut the door with the inevitable bang, and we were on the point of departure.

"She will be left," thought I, and I opened the window and cried "Madame! Madame!" I fancied I saw her in the distance on the platform, but she evidently did not hear me. The whistle blew. What was to be done? An idea flashed through my brain. She would be left at that cold, dismal station without a scrap of luggage. She should at least have her small belongings. I rifled the racks, collected the parcels and bags with the rug, and threw them to a man who was near the carriage, crying, "They belong to that lady yonder!"

The man took the things and approached the lady I had indicated. At the same moment an official came rushing to the door of the carriage attended by my blonde companion. He hustled rather than helped her into the carriage while the train was beginning to move.

Horror of horror! I had mistaken the lady. She I had seen a distance off on the platform was not the right one, thanks to my imperfect sight, and both wore a grey hat and feather.

She had no sooner entered the carriage when she saw at a glance that her rug and bags were gone. And for the first time she looked at me—and what a look it was! Her blue eyes seemed to dance.

I explained the situation.

"I am in despair!" I protested. "I thought you must miss the train, and I feared you would take cold. I did it, as I believed, for the best. I will telegraph at the next station for the things, and if it come to the worst I 'll return myself to Tonnerre."

"A nice position I 'm in, surely!" she sighed, and her teeth seemed to chatter with the cold.

"Madame," I said, "I implore you to accept my rug. If you fall ill it will be my fault. I sincerely regret my dreadful blunder."

She gave me a glance of pity, and I determined to follow up my point. It was not difficult to continue a conversation now.

"Madame," said I, "we are going slowly just now. I 'll jump from the train, return to Tonnerre, get the things, and follow you on to Lyons by next train, if you 'll await me there," and, throwing my rug into her lap, I seized the outside handle of the door.

"Are you mad, Sir, to think of such a thing?" she cried. "You might kill yourself, and far better the loss of my luggage than the loss of your life. No, no, Sir, I appreciate your kindness, but desist, I beg."

"As you please, Madame," I said, and relocked the door.

"How was it," she asked with a smile, "that you took another lady for me?"

"Her attire was the same. True, I only saw her back, at a distance, but I thought I recognised the elegant figure."

"Oh, that was it, eh?" And again she smiled, and a pleasant expression came into her eyes. The ice was now broken—the ice of the conversation, *bien entendu*—for otherwise I shivered. But how quickly I forgot the cold and the journey! I found her charming, adorable. I really began to think there was something in the poetic theory of love at first sight.

Like myself, she was fond of travel and literature. She knew Southern Italy well; so did I. She had been to Egypt; so had I. We compared notes, and found we knew several families in London that we both visited. How curious I should have missed her!

She conversed naïvely, amiably, with an unaffected grace of manner that I admire so much in woman. And she was admirably read, too—repeated lines out of Browning and Tennyson, and quoted the opinions of a dozen authors of eminence on various subjects. Her talk, too, took an epigrammatic, sub-acid turn, now and then, which

(Concluded on page 30.)

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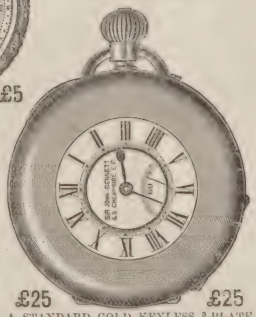

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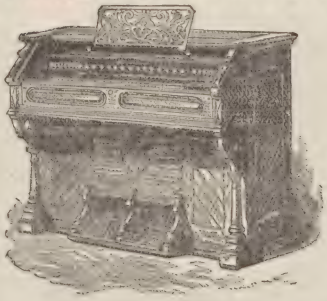

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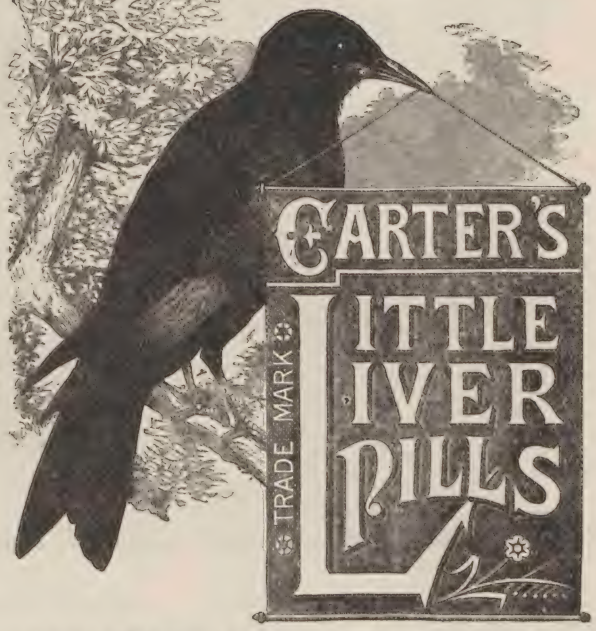

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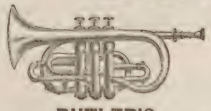

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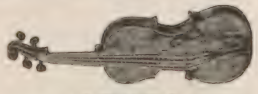

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was deliciously piquant. "This woman," said I to myself, "is not only pretty, but she has the mind of a Muse. I am sure I love her."

Our next stop was at Macon, when I telegraphed for the things left behind. At Lyons I received a despatch saying they would be sent by the next train to Marseilles. Madame was delighted at this news.

We continued to chat with unaffected freedom, and by the time we reached Avignon I had acquired the information that my heroine was a widow of two years' standing, and that her husband had been killed in a railway disaster in the United States. Of course I sympathised, said all sorts of kind things, and, as my nose began to grow pink and my lips blue with the intense cold, she moved into the seat next to me, and insisted that I should share the rug I had lent her. Then we drifted into more talk, and I turned it into a sentimental channel, and protested, what was perfectly true, that I had met some of my dearest friends in the first place by accident in just such a manner as we were thrown together. Of course, I told her that I was a bachelor; and she suddenly remembered that she had heard my name from a Mr. and Mrs. Lewin Lightfoot, who were then, curiously enough, staying at Nice. Mrs. Lightfoot was an engaging American lady, and her husband was a young journalist of promise. Happy concatenation of circumstances!

Midnight arrived and so did the train in the great *gare* of Marseilles. She had ordered a room at the hotel of the station, and off she went with her birds, handing me my rug with a profusion of thanks.

"Au revoir!" I cried. "We shall probably meet at the Lightfoots', at Nice."

I passed the night at the Hôtel Louvre et Paix, where my good friend Paul Neuschwander, despite the late hour, received me cordially, and had a comforting little repast ready. I own up that I hardly slept a wink for thinking of my pretty widow. I had taken cold, too, but never mind: a Turkish bath and the genial sun of Nice would soon put me right.

Two days after I was at the pretty city of the Riviera, and comfortably quartered at the Hôtel Suisse, at the end of the Promenade des Anglais. I had taken the precaution to telegraph to my friends the Lightfoots to say I should arrive by a certain train.

It was not long before a messenger arrived with a letter containing an invitation to dinner. Of course I went, and the first person I saw in the salon of my friend's was the adorable widow.

When I was presented, a smile played about her lovely mouth. I bowed and said: "Tonnerre! Did the things come safely?"

"All 's well that ends well," she half whispered.

"What a cold you have!" remarked my host. "Where did you pick that up? Did you bring it from England?"

"I fancy I contracted it between Paris and Marseilles," I replied. "But I do not regret it."

Nobody understood this odd remark, but I felt the soft and friendly glance of my charming companion glide towards me like a sunbeam.

I was happily placed next to the widow at dinner, and we were all extremely gay and happy. Madame related our adventure in the train during the dessert in her own merry graphic way, with touches of her own by way of embellishment that caused explosions of laughter. I was deeper in love every minute!

But why proceed further? You can guess the rest. I stayed a month at Nice and Monte Carlo; attended the *bataille des fleurs*, took my charmer to view the gamesters at Monaco, and made endless excursions around the neighbourhood. I proposed, was accepted, and a week after next Christmas Day we are to be married at St. George's, Hanover-square. It will be a quiet wedding, my dear friend, but if I don't see you in the church you will be with us at the breakfast. We shall go to Nice for our honeymoon, and as we pass Tonnerre I shall think what a fortunate occurrence it was that I threw that small luggage out of the window.

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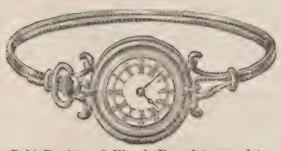

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And all who suffer from NERVOUS EXHAUSTION, IMPAIRED VITALITY, BRAIN FAG, SLEEPLESSNESS, RHEUMATISM, GOUT, SCIATICA, LUMBAGO, INDIGESTION, CONSTIPATION, LOSS OF APPETITE, KIDNEY AND OTHER ORGANIC TROUBLES, &c.

HARNESS'

ELECTROPATHIC BATTERY BELT

HAS CURED THOUSANDS OF SUFFERERS

Without the all of poisonous drugs or quack nostrums. If any of our readers doubt the remarkable curative powers of this genuine and convenient appliance, we would ask them to carefully read the following letters, and write for our Book of Testimonials; or better still, call, if possible, and personally inspect the originals. They will at the same time be able to see the Belts scientifically tested, and have the various curative appliances fully explained to them.

REGD. TRADE MARK.

RHEUMATISM EXTERMINATED FROM THE SYSTEM.

Mr. W. GUNS, the celebrated Nottingham professional, writing from the County Cricket Warehouse, 14, Carrington Street, Nottingham, says: "You will be glad to hear that the Electropathic Belt I had from you has quite cured the rheumatism that prevented me from playing football, and it has also been of great benefit in sustaining strength of nerve and endurance, which qualities are both of great importance in my profession."

GEORGE COPPEY, Esq., 129, Morley Avenue, Wood Green, N., writes: "I take up my pen with pleasure to thank you for the great benefit my wife has received from the use of your Electropathic Belt. She had been suffering from acute sciatica for five months. We had tried three doctors, and had, as we thought, given every known remedy a fair trial, without any result. Within forty-eight hours after wearing it, to the wonder of all, she could stand upright, the pain gradually leaving her, and not returning from that day to this."

NERVOUS WEAKNESS CURED.

T. J. [illegible] writes: "I have much pleasure in recommending Harness' Marvellous Electropathic Properties. I was troubled with nervous weakness, and after wearing your Belt for a short time I found myself quite restored to health."

DEBILITY AND INDIGESTION CURED.

Mr. CHAS. SIBERY, 1, Queen Street Lane, Dover, writes: "I suffered severely from general debility and chronic indigestion, and on May 12 last procured one of your Electropathic Belts, in the hope of being relieved. I am glad to say that after wearing it a week there was a decided improvement, and that I am now infinitely better. My digestive powers are much stronger, I have less lassitude, and, in fact, I may say that I am on the way to a perfect restoration."

IMPAIRED VITALITY SPEEDILY RESTORED.

CHAS. POWELL, Esq., of 63, Conway Street, Liverpool, writes: "A month ago I procured one of your Electropathic Belts. I had been suffering severely from want of vital force, physical exhaustion, indigestion, and flatulence, without deriving my material benefit from the several doctors who had treated me. Since wearing your appliance I am glad to say my health has very much improved, the digestive powers are considerably better, and I am altogether much stronger."

LADIES' AILMENTS CURED.

Miss E. MILLARD, writes: "I have much pleasure in recommending Harness' Electropathic Belt. I was troubled with ladies' ailments, and after wearing your Belt for a short time I found myself quite restored to health."

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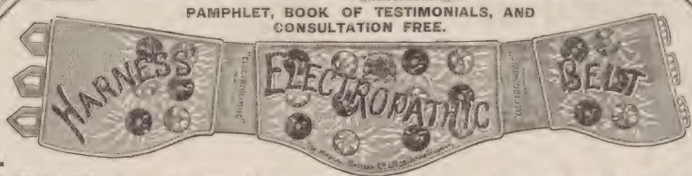

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HARNESS' ELECTROPATHIC BELT is light and comfortable in wear, and is guaranteed to imperceptibly generate a mild continuous current of electricity, which cannot fail to invigorate the debilitated constitution. It also promotes the circulation, gives tone to muscles and nerves, and speedily arrests any sign of PREMATURE DECLINE OF VITAL ENERGY. RESIDENTS AT A DISTANCE and all who are unable to call and avail themselves of a free personal consultation should write at once to the MEDICAL BATTERY COMPANY, Limited, for a copy of their descriptive Illustrated Pamphlet and Book of Testimonials, which may be obtained gratis and post free on application to

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Cornet in B♭ and A, "Ordinary Model," in Case complete, 28s., for beginners.
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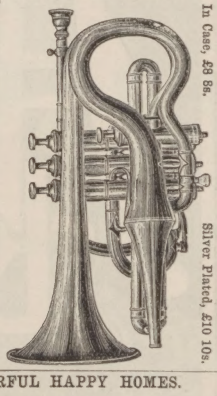

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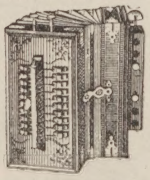

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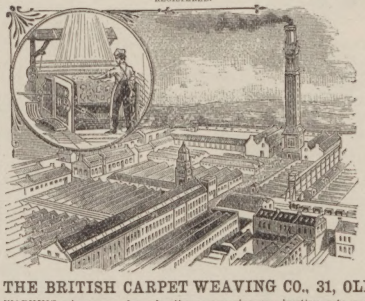

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Send for Sample, and, if not satisfactory, Money will be returned in full.

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Composed only of purest, simple Drugs. The most delicate in Health may use them in perfect confidence.

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They are emphatically the best Cough Remedy ever made.

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Sold by all Chemists, in Tins, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each.

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Beetham's Glycerine and Cucumber

is the Most Perfect Preparation for Preserving and Beautifying THE SKIN ever produced.

ITS EFFECT IN REMOVING ALL

ROUGHNESS, REDNESS, CHAPS, &c.,

IS ALMOST MAGICAL,

and by its use THE SKIN is rendered

SOFT, SMOOTH, AND WHITE,

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FROST, COLD WINDS, and HARD WATER.

No Lady who values her COMPLEXION should be without it at this Season of the Year. If used after Dancing or visiting heated apartments, it will be found

DELIGHTFULLY COOLING and REFRESHING.

For the NURSERY it is INVALUABLE, as it is PERFECTLY HARMLESS.

Beware of Injurious Imitations. "BEETHAM'S" is the only genuine.

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Sole Makers: M. BEETHAM and SON, CHEMISTS, CHELTENHAM.

Sold everywhere in Tins; or post free from the Works, 7*d.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*, *&* 3*s.*
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CHAINS, 2s. 6d. each. Post Free, 3d. extra.

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"9, Cardiors-street, Dalling-road, Hammersmith, May 7, 1890.—Dear Sir,—I received the Chain and Seal, also the Watch, and am very pleased with them. Will you send me another Gentleman's Chain and seal, also the Watch? I enclose Postal Order, 3s. 9d.—Yours, &c., A. SAYERS."

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"Church-street, Lumley, March 16, 1888.—Dear Sir,—I write to let you know that I have received the Albert and Watch all safe, and am well pleased with them. I have no more to say at present.—W. TWEEDY."

"Alma-street, Kentish Town, April 27, 1888.—I received Chain and Watch last evening safely, for which receive my best thanks. I am very pleased with both.—W. S."

"36, Warwick-road, Maida-hill, April 23, 1888.—My sister having seen the Chain I purchased from you, she would like one like it. Please send one.—MISS. LEGGATT."

"Halstead, Essex, Dec. 20, 1888.—Sir,—Please send me two more Chains, one Locket and one Seal, like the ones you have sent; also the Watches.—Yours truly, WM. COOPER."

"Weekly Cottage, Kettering, Aug. 31, 1888.—Sir,—I received the Watch and Chain this morning, and was very pleased, more so with the Watch presented, as I think it is beautiful. Please send Sovereign Purse. 2s. 6d.—B. BARKER."

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"Cottage Hospital, Faversham, Feb. 14, 1890.—Gentlemen,—Watch and Chain and Ring received safely this morning. I am very pleased with them. Will you kindly send two Pearl Rings, 209 in your Catalogue, 1s. 6d. and 4s. 6d.? 6s. enclosed.—Miss SNOW."

PLEASE OBSERVE.

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The only perfect substitute yet invented. The new Gold and Diamonds are perfect in every respect, imitating in appearance 18-ct. Gold and Diamonds of the first water. Having been tested, we are confident of their wear. They will stand all Waters, Acids, Alkali, Heat, &c., the Gold being one colour throughout, and beautifully finished. The Stones are set by experienced setters, the lustre rendering them equal to the most expensive Diamonds.

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Equals 22-ct., and is stamped; has as good an appearance; answers same purpose; will stand all waters.
Post-free, 1s. 6d.

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Beautifully chased and well finished, equal to one costing 50s.; detection defied. Post-free, 1s. 6d.

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Very handsome (our specialité); mixed stones; wear guaranteed; equal to one costing £5.
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Very handsome.
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Most fashionable setting (The Jubilee). No more £20 ones required—this is as good. Post-free, 1s. 6d.

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Diamond and Ruby Eyes. Can be worn by Lady or Gentleman.
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Our latest Design. Can be had in any kind of Stone—Pearls, Corals, Rubies, &c. Style, quality, and economy combined. Post-free, 2s. 6d.

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"M. WILLIAMSON."

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